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THE
THREE RELIGIONS OF CHINA

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THE THREE RELIGIONS OF CHINA

LECTURES DELIVERED AT OXFORD

BY THE REV.

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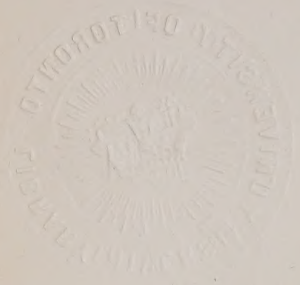

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TO THE MEMORY OF THE

REVEREND JAMES LEGGE

D.D., LL.D.

FIRST PROFESSOR OF CHINESE IN

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

A GREAT SCHOLAR AND A DEVOTED MISSIONARY

PREFACE

These Lectures were first delivered at Oxford to students designated for mission work in China. They were meant to serve as an introduction to the three recognized religions of that country. The first issue was exhausted during the War. As the demand continues I have somewhat revised the Lectures, especially the one on Buddhism, and again offer them as a fair and, I hope, generous statement of the religious beliefs of China.

W. E. SOOTHILL.

Oxford, 1923.

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A FIRE mist and a planet,
  A crystal and a cell,
A jellyfish and a Saurian,
  And caves where cave men dwell;
Then a sense of love and duty
  And a face turned from the clod:
Some call it Evolution,
  And others call it God.

The echo of ancient chanting,
  The gleam of altar-flames;
The stones of a hundred temples
  Graven with sacred names;
Man's patient quest for the secret
  In soul, in star, in sod:
Some deem it superstition,
  And others believe it is God.

A picket frozen on duty,
  A mother starved for her brood,
Socrates drinking the hemlock,
  And Jesus on the rood;
The millions who, humble and nameless,
  The straight, hard path have trod;
Some call it consecration,
  And others feel it is God.

PROFESSOR CARRUTH,
Quoted from Dr. R. F. Horton's *Great Issues*.

LECTURE I

INTRODUCTORY: THE THREE RELIGIONS

THERE are three recognized religions in China. Amongst Europeans these are commonly known as Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Two of them, the first and the last, are indigenous. The other, Buddhism, while known in China before the Christian era, was not formally introduced until the first century A. D.

Each of the three religions has been the recipient of Imperial recognition and favour, and the three may be considered as three aspects of the established religion of the country. Such, at any rate, was the case until the recent revolution. From time to time each has had its period of ascendancy. The Buddhists have had their periods of power; so have the Taoists; but for the most part Confucianism has been the dominant factor at Court, and indeed is generally considered to be the State religion.

Toleration has been the prevailing attitude of Buddhism and Taoism towards Confucianism, even during their periods of ascendancy, but the Confucianists have ever been jealous of their rivals, and even persecuted them. Such persecution, however, has never attained to the severity exhibited in Europe, for its direction has rather been against temples and monastic establishments than against the persons of the occupants thereof. For Confucianism is as much a philosophy as a religion, and philosophy seldom generates sufficient heat to persecute with undue fervour. Or, perhaps, it is too wise and sees the folly of persecution. At any rate, whilst wars of

extermination have been prosecuted by the State against the Moslems in China, as also against the Taoists—chiefly on political grounds—religious wars between the three religions, or the horrors of the Inquisition on account of religion, have been unknown, for intensity of religious feeling has never been sufficiently strong to produce extremities of so virulent a character.

A very astute Chinese pastor once said to me as I approached his abode, 'I recognized you across the river.'

'At such a distance how could you distinguish me from my Chinese companions?' I asked.

'You are in white clothes,' was the reply.

'But so are the others,' I remarked.

'Ah,' he replied with covert meaning, 'but your foreign whites are very white, and your foreign blacks are very black.'

Whether this be true of our character in general I will not stay to discuss. It is certainly true of our religious persecutions, and though many of these have also been dictated by policy, that policy has been backed by an intensity of religious zeal which for the most part is absent in China, where policy alone, and not love of religion and the gods, has hitherto been the predominant factor in persecution.

This leads me to remind you of that of which you are probably all aware, that amongst the people at large the three religions are not mutually exclusive. The deficiency of Confucianism in making little or no provision, beyond a calm stoicism, for the spiritual demands of human nature has been supplied by the more spiritual provision of Buddhism, and the indefiniteness of Confucius as to a continued existence after death has been met by the more definite Taoist dogma of immortality. The three are complementary rather than antagonistic to each other, and together they make a fuller provision for human nee

than any one of them does separately. Consequently no clear line of demarcation popularly exists between them. For general purposes we may say that the shrines of each are open to all and availed of by all.

It is impossible, therefore, to divide the Chinese into three separate mutually exclusive churches or religious communities, as is the case, say, with Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, and the Reformed branch of the Christian Church. Those writers, therefore, who speak of so many hundred millions of Chinese Buddhists have as much right to the claim as others would have who claimed the same hundreds of millions for Confucianism or Taoism. There are, it is true, a certain number of the educated who are strictly Confucianist, and who heartily despise both Buddhism and Taoism. Their number, however, is quite limited, for there are few among them who do not summon Buddhist or Taoist monks, or indeed both, to perform the rites for the dead, or consult their divinities in case of sickness or distress. The Buddhist and Taoist clergy, an unlettered class, for the most part confine themselves to their respective cults, and while a few of the laity devote themselves, some solely to Buddhism, some solely to Taoism, the great mass of the people have no prejudices and make no embarrassing distinctions; they belong to none of the three religions, or, more correctly, they belong to all three. In other words, they are eclectic, and use whichever form best responds to the requirement of the occasion for which they use religion.

There is much truth, then, in the Chinese saying that the three religions are one, and this view enables the people, as a whole, to frequent whatever shrine they individually please. No sense of antagonism or inappropriateness exists in the mind of a man who on the same day, and for the same purpose, visits the shrines of each of the three cults, any more than a sense of antagonism or

inappropriateness would occur to him in consulting three different doctors, say, by way of illustration, an allopathist, a homœopathist, and a herbalist, one immediately after the other, for the same complaint, and—perhaps wisely—using his own judgement as to whose medicine he swallowed.

Let us now turn to a consideration of the terms used by the Chinese for their 'religions'. I have told you that there are three recognized religions or isms. These are known in their own language as the San Chiao, and are commonly spoken of as the Ju, Shih, Tao, San Chiao. I give them in their usual Chinese order. The first of these is the Ju Chiao, usually styled by Europeans Confucianism, so called after its founder, K'ung Fu-tzu, latinized by the early Roman missionaries as Confucius. The word Ju means cultured or learned. Hence, Ju Chiao means the cult of the learned. The second is the Shih Chiao. The word Shih is an abbreviation for Shih-chia-mu-ni, the Chinese form of Sakyamuni, one of the names of the Buddha. Shih Chiao therefore stands for Buddhism. The third term is Tao Chiao. The word Tao we shall discuss later. At present suffice it that it means The Way. The foundation of the Tao Chiao, that is to say, Taoism, is attributed to Lao Tzu, or Laocius, about whom more will be said later.

Chiao is a word which requires a somewhat closer consideration, as it is well you should have a clearer conception of its meaning. For, seeing it applied to each of the three cults, it would not be unreasonable for you, through your lifelong association with the idea of religion and the Church, to apply the same terminology to the San Chiao which you apply to your own, and to consider them as three religions, or as three churches.

Now the word Chiao does not mean either religion or a church in our sense of those terms. Etymologically considered, its construction in ancient times consisted of three parts, namely, 'to beat,' 'a child,' and 'to imitate'.

From this we may infer that 'to beat a child into imitation' —of parental example—was its meaning. The later form of the character consists of 'to beat', and 'filial', suggesting the idea of rigorously bringing the child into a filial condition. At any rate we may observe that 'Spare the rod and spoil the child' has ancient authority in China. The significance of the word Chiao to-day is 'to teach', and its meaning as a substantive is sufficiently covered by school, or cult, or ism. In our sense of the term it does not connote the word church, and only indifferently does it connote our idea of religion. The Chinese, recognizing this deficiency and feeling the need of a term meaning a religion, have recently adopted the term Tsung-Chiao from the Japanese, who had adapted it to suit their own need for a term to cover the Western idea of religion. We need not stay to discuss the origin or meaning of the term; suffice it that Tsung-Chiao is the term now adopted for religion, or rather, a religion.

There is still another term to which I have already referred, and to which we may advisedly pay some preliminary attention, namely, the word Tao. We shall have to deal with it more in detail later, but a few words now may somewhat clear our way. The Taoists have claimed the word as their own and called their cult Taoism; but Tao is a word common to all three schools, for each of them devotes itself to the theory and practice of Tao. One might therefore naturally infer that by Tao religion is meant. This, however, is only one of its meanings, for Tao is one of those delightfully fugitive words which eludes the grasp of any single equivalent. Take the opening words of the sole work attributed to Laocius, the brief Tao Tê Ching: 'Tao k'o tao fei ch'ang Tao.' Here we have Tao thrice repeated, twice as a substantive, once as a verb: '[The] Tao [that] can be tao'd[1] is not [the] eternal

[1] Or 'expressed'.

Tao'; or it may be translated, 'The Via that is viable is not the eternal Via.' The word religion would not translate Tao in this passage. Laocius in this very first phrase presents the same difficulty to the translator that he himself is struggling to interpret—What is Tao? In this passage it has been variously translated by God, by Nature, by Reason, by the Logos, by Law, by Principle, and perhaps wisest of all, by Tao.

The composition of the character itself does not give us all the help we should like. It consists of a 'head' and 'to proceed', and its ordinary meaning is a way, a path or road. In the philosophic sense it may be defined as the eternal order of the universe. Considered in the absolute it might almost be called Nature with a capital, in the relative as nature. We shall discuss its definition still further when we consider Taoism. In the meantime perhaps we cannot do better than accept Dr. Williams' definition as it relates to our present subject. He describes it as 'the unknown factor or principle of nature', and 'the way it acts in matter and mind'. Tao, then, may be considered as the eternal and ubiquitous impersonal principle by which the universe has been produced and is supported and governed. Both Confucius and Laocius, and all sages and seers before and after them, are the exponents of Tao as it manifests itself in creation, and especially in its relationship with men.

We have now, I hope, obtained an idea, sufficient for working purposes, of the words Ju, Shih, Tao, San Chiao.[1] The word San means 'three'.

I would now like to explain a little more in detail the chief differences between the three schools. In the first place it must be remembered that religion did not begin in China with Confucius or Laocius, any more than it did in India with Sakyamuni, or amongst the Israelites with

[1] 儒釋道三教.

Moses. Confucius, Laocius, Buddha adopted and modified religious systems already ancient. They were reformers of religion, and each of them stands in the main for one aspect of those religions. In each case they only partially succeeded in bringing about the reforms they desired, for the old native beliefs and practices refused to be shaken off, and while the people adopted the name of the reformer and many of his ideas became common property, in reality these were superimposed upon the old beliefs and practices rather than substituted for them. For instance, though Buddhism was the chief religion of India for a thousand years, India was never really Buddhist, and in the end the old tree over which it had grown reasserted itself, outgrew its parasite, and thrust it aside. A similar process of the overgrowing of pagan beliefs and practices is observable in the case of Christianity, though the vitality of Christianity in its more advanced forms has killed the old tree, while leaving its shape still visible. To change the metaphor, Christianity has been able to dissolve out of the old material its pagan principle by the infiltration of a spiritual principle of higher potency.

In discussing the two indigenous religions we may say that they did not begin to exist as separate cults until the sixth century B. C. under the influence of the contemporaneous sages Laocius and Confucius, the latter being the later of the two. The ideas promulgated by these two men represent two different strata of the old religion, the politico-religious side being emphasized by Confucius, and the ascetico-mystical side by Laocius. There was a third and prior stratum which neither of them propagated, indeed out of which they sought to rise, namely, the old magical and spiritualistic animism which was the principal religion of the common people. This third form has maintained itself in spite of the scepticism of Confucius, and it has taken entire possession of the cult founded by

Laocius, though without a word of encouragement in his Tao Te Ching. This third, or magical form, which, strictly speaking, is neither Confucian nor Laocian, but which has an admixture of both, together with a later intermixture of Buddhist ideas, is the prevalent religion of the common people. Nor is it limited to the common folk, for even the average Confucian scholar is steeped in its superstitions, and as to the Taoist, he is altogether given over to them.

I must, however, make it clear to you that both Laocius and Confucius and the elect of their two schools have advanced a philosophy and a religion far surpassing this lower form. So, also, did the great men of China who preceded them, in whose footsteps they professed to follow, and whose lives and teaching represented to them the pristine golden age of antiquity which they idealized and idolized.

Referring, now, to the original schools of these two philosophers, we may say that the main difference between them was that Laocius considered that 'being' is 'doing', while Confucius harnessed 'doing' to 'being'. It is the old question of faith and works, of quietism and action, which is found in all the more advanced religions of the world. The attitude of Laocius is that of the quietist—let Tao work within the emptied heart, and without human effort it will work through the surrendered and unstriving life upon all other men. In other words, let a man become the unconscious, or rather the subconscious, medium of Tao, and Tao will tranquilly flow through him to others. We find similar ideas propounded also by Confucius, but with him effort is as necessary as quiescence; the will must be developed, virtue must be cultivated, 'doing' is as requisite to 'being' as 'being' to 'doing'. Laocius would let Tao have free course, run, and be glorified. Confucius would deepen and broaden the channel, and

improve its gradient. The Taoist founders say to the Confucianists, 'All your religion and virtue and knowledge are useless, nay, worse than useless, for all is forced and unnatural. It is only the spontaneous, the natural, that is of value, all else thwarts Tao; hence, with all your assisting of Nature, what advance have you made in bettering humanity? The world is infinitely worse now than it was in the primaeval days of innocence, and this all arises from your religious ceremonies, your so-called virtues, and your learning. Let be—let Nature, let Tao have its free course, and pristine happiness will return.' Both philosophers looked backward, not forward, to the golden age, as their followers still continue to do.

There is much that is truly admirable in the teachings of the founders of both these systems of faith and practice, and the missionary to China may well rejoice and be glad that God has given such pure-minded, such noble-spirited seers to that great land. The ideals of a people are its greatest asset. The nation whose ideals are the best rises highest. And while defective views of God, and man's relationship to Him, have hampered the upward progress of the Chinese, their sages have been men worthy of all honour, whose faces have been set towards the sun, and away from the abomination of darkness in which some of the other nations of the earth have weltered.

I like to ponder over that wonderful thousand years which culminated in the advent of Jesus Christ, and to picture the adolescence of the human race, its discovery and discussion of the problems that faced its rapidly forming communities, with their increasingly complex internal and external relationships, its discovery of systems and apparatus of writing, the elevation above his fellows of the man who could inscribe his thoughts, and above all the grand discovery that Nature is a unity, and not a heterogeneous conglomeration of uncontrolled and antagonistic

forces. The human mind was never more alert, the powers of observation never more keen, and it was during this period that the same or similar ideas found expression in the East which found utterance also in the West, in China as well as in Greece.

It is my realization of the profundity of the problems—some of them still unsolved—which these philosophers of China had to face, with few, if any, treatises to help them, as well as my unfeigned reverence for the greatness of their souls and the sincerity of their purpose, which leads me to urge you, both in your thought and speech, to treat them with all honour. Confucius 'sacrificed to the dead as if they were present'. We, too, who believe in immortality, and who—at any rate some of us—hope some day to come into the presence of the world's great seers, would like to do so with a clear conscience that we have upheld their honour in their absence. This need not prevent fair-minded criticism, or ever contradiction of their views—'as if they were present'—but at least in such a spirit we shall not father on them children of superstition for whom they are not directly responsible.

There are two ways of approach to the religions of a people. One is to seek directly the fountain from which they sprang. The other is to examine the channel through which runs the living river into which the spring has swelled, or perhaps the wide and stagnant marsh into which it has drained and dissipated its erstwhile energy.

The former, a study of the historic sources, was the method adopted in his *Religions of China*, by the great Sinologist, Dr. James Legge, at one time a Professor in this University. Dr. John Ross has followed in Dr. Legge's footsteps in his book *The Ancient Religion of China*. The other method, an examination of present-day conditions, is the mode adopted by Dr. J. J. M. de Groot, who

has already published six large and valuable volumes. These are the result of a long and careful study of the religious practices of the present-day Chinese, especially of those residing in the neighbourhood of Amoy, in the south of China. Dr. de Groot has summarized his observations in a series of lectures, delivered at the Hartford School of Missions in America, and published under the title of *The Religions of the Chinese*.

Both methods carry with them a certain danger. A study of a religion which limits itself to the teachings of the early founders, and which ignores the present condition of its development, will give a very imperfect presentation of the religion as a whole. On the other hand, a study which is limited to its expression in practice, without doing justice to the ideals of the founders, equally fails to do justice to the religion as a whole; for the religious ideals of a people, while they may be written on the tables of their hearts and consciences, often find very imperfect expression in their lives. Mere observation of external conduct is not the best guide to the secret aspirations of the soul.

It seems to me, therefore, a duty, while urging you to read, mark, and inwardly digest the lectures of Dr. de Groot, at the same time to express my opinion that in his presentation of the religions of the Chinese he has emphasized only one side of the evidence, and painted the stream as 'dank and foul in its marshy cowl', while failing to show that nevertheless there is a living current there all the time, 'cleansing its stream as it hurries along'—for the flowing stream set free by good men of yore still runs, often laden with the offscourings of human ignorance, but all the while a purifying stream.

In these lectures, therefore, while recognizing to the full the mass of superstition held in solution in the waters, I propose to exhibit to you rather that there is water there;

moreover, that it has done, and is doing, good service in opening and keeping open the channel, ready for the nobler stream of Living Water which, in its onward flow, is now beginning to pour itself into the channel of the religious life of China.

Nevertheless, while endeavouring on the one hand to exhibit to you whatsoever things are beautiful and true, and therefore, what material we, as missionaries, have at hand of value, I shall feel it my duty on the other hand to indicate wherein the three religions are defective in certain ideas and forces which we in the West have been happy enough to inherit, believe to be vital, and know we are able to supply. There may be times when condemnation, or even ridicule and scorn, are justifiable as a means of arousing attention to and destroying the foolish excesses of religious superstition; but I think you will agree with me that a more effective method for establishing and advancing the cause of right religion is to lay hold of the excellent material which the sages and scholars of China have through generations of faithful toil so arduously gathered together. Let it always be remembered that, just as with ourselves, so in China, it has only been 'through much tribulation' that men of high purpose have attained to the knowledge they possessed. Their store of knowledge, which they valued above their lives, has come down as a priceless bequest to their own people. Nor has it been bequeathed to them alone, but to us, who, in these late days, are pressing upon the Chinese, not always as graciously as we might, a religion which could find no adequate medium of expression were it not for the variety and accuracy of their observations, and the admirable terminology, so far as it goes, which has given those observations their separate and well-defined distinctions.

Now, I think we may take it that the religion handed down by Confucius has its roots in a primitive animism.

His religion undoubtedly inculcates the worship of the forces of nature, or perhaps the spirits which govern natural phenomena. These spirits, however, are all subject to a personal Supreme Ruler, who governs all creation. As Shang Ti, through the ages down to the end of the late Manchu dynasty, He was sacrificed to by the Emperor. As T'ien, or Heaven, in the impersonal, or less personal, sense, all men are of His generation and may cry to Him. Filial piety demands also that the departed ancestors shall not be forgotten, but be worshipped in sacrifice.

At a later date, partly as the result of Buddhist idolatry and Taoist hero-worship, and partly as the outcome of the idea which lies behind the worship of Confucius himself, the State adopted the principle of canonizing eminent deceased statesmen and heroes, appointing them as tutelary deities over the various divisions of the country, and even recognizing their authority in the realms beyond the present life. The temples of these tutelary deities are now found everywhere, and though often in the charge of a Taoist, or a Buddhist priest, none of the three religions lays claim to these temples for its own. For purposes of convenience, however, I shall include this cult under that of Confucianism, for theoretically Confucianism is the real State religion, and these tutelary deities are as much the outcome of degeneration, or development, in that cult as they are of Taoist origin.

The Ju Chiao, or Confucianism, which consists chiefly of the officials and *literati*, has, in addition to the above-named degenerate, or at least greatly modified form, the rites and practices laid down by Confucius, and also the worship of Confucius and his immediate disciples. The Taoist has the divinities and practices of his school, a school which has degenerated from a search after the absolute and the immortal into the pursuit of thaumaturgy and demonolatry and the practice in general of the magical side

of pre-Confucian and pre-Laocian religion. The Buddhist also has his own objects of worship, and especially his offices for the dead. Some five to ten millions of Moslems and two millions of Christians have, of course, their own category.

To sum up, then, there are three recognized religions in China. Of these Confucianism is generally counted as the State religion, but Taoism and Buddhism are also recognized. Buddhism was imported from India, but Confucianism and Taoism are native religions which have grown out of a common primitive stock. This primitive religion originated in a prehistoric animism, but, before the separation of Confucianism and Taoism, it had already reached a higher stage, while still retaining its animistic and magical elements. The spiritual character of neither Confucianism nor Taoism was highly developed, and the introduction of Mahāyāna Buddhism stimulated spiritual inquiry and practice, influencing both the other cults, and being in turn influenced by both. The three cults may not be considered as mutually exclusive. All three claim to teach Tao, or the order of the universe as it relates to mankind.

Partly through inherent forces, and partly as the result of Buddhist influence, a great development occurred during the Christian era in the national religion. This consisted of the canonization and worship of deceased worthies, statesmen, warriors, and officials, who have become the tutelary deities of the country, and are now, together with the ancestor, prominent objects of worship. As this cult is part of the State religion, I have included it in Confucianism, though none of the three religions recognizes it as its own.

To generalize is as unsatisfactory as it is easy, and it is perhaps, therefore, indiscreet to do so in regard to the three religions, but, taking a broad survey, we may say

that Confucianism represents the politico-religious and moral side of Chinese life, the community and the State ranking foremost in the mind of its founder. Taoism may be considered as standing for the individual, for the ascetic, spiritualistic and magical side of the national life. Buddhism also may be reckoned as individualistic, and in especial as representing the *vanitas vanitatum* of mundane existence and salvation for the life to come.

LECTURE II

CONFUCIUS AND HIS SCHOOL

This course of lectures has been arranged subjectively rather than historically. In order, however, that you may have some idea of the authoritative foundations on which the three religions rest, I have considered it well at the outset to devote the next three lectures to a brief discussion of their great founders and transmitters. For just as any discussion of Christianity loses much of its value when it ignores the person of Our Lord and the Bible, so do the religions of the Far East when their Founders and original doctrines are ignored.

As in the case of the other races of humanity, so with China, the men who first discovered and propagated religious ideas are unknown to us. The first name which appears when Chinese mythology enters upon the legendary period is that of Fu-hsi, the reputed first ruler of the Chinese, and the date of his reign is generally reckoned as from 2852 to 2738 B.C. The only references I need make to him are, first, that he is credited with the invention of the famous *pakua* in its original form, that is, an octagonal figure containing eight series of whole and broken lines, which has played an important part in divination and natural philosophy; second, that he offered sacrifice on T'ai Shan in the province of Shantung, one of the sacred mountain peaks of the country. While the written authority for this act of worship is 2,000 years after the event, it is interesting as being the first statement we

possess of the earliest recorded act of religious worship in China. The sacrifice thus offered was one which in succeeding ages has been the prerogative of the Son of Heaven, to the Power above him.

Passing over Shên Nung, the reputed father of agriculture and medicine, we come to Huang Ti, 2704–2595 B.C., during which period further religious observances are mentioned, and to him is also attributed the erection of 'the first temple for the offering of sacrifices',[1] probably for the worship of ancestors. His successor, Shao Hao, and his officers gave themselves up to heretical doctrines, probably of a magical or spiritualistic order, to the neglect and violation of the worship of Shang Ti. Chüan Hsü, who followed him, suppressed these heretical teachings and restored the orthodox sacrifices. Little or nothing else is known of this ruler, but in this one act it is not unlikely that he prevented his people from retrogressing into a gross animism from which they were slowly emerging.

His grandson, the famous emperor, Yao (2357–2258 B.C.); Yao's equally famous successor, Shun (2258–2206 B.C.); the great emperor, Yü (2205–2198 B.C.), who subdued the 'flood' and founded the first dynasty, known as the Hsia dynasty; T'ang (1766–1754 B.C.), who overthrew the last licentious sovereign of the Hsia and founded the second or Shang dynasty; and Wu (1122–1116 B.C.), who overthrew the last wicked sovereign of the Shang, and founded the famous Chou dynasty, together with his able brother, Wên, whom he appointed regent at his death—these are some of the most noteworthy of 'divine rulers' to whom both Confucianists and Taoists ascribe the development of civilization and of religion.

While, however, other sages are mentioned in addition to these, and though Confucius calls himself 'a transmitter

[1] Hirth's *Ancient History of China*, p. 21.

and not a creator', it is to him, 'the uncrowned king of China,' that are owing most of the records we possess of the ancient religion. He it was who edited the ancient records and handed them down in the Five Canons, namely, the Book of History, the ancient Odes, the Book of Changes (or Divination), the Annals of the State of Lu, and the Book of Rites, though the last has since undergone considerable revision, as probably have also the others.

As Confucianism is so closely associated with the great sage and his teachings, which he based on what he considered to be the doctrines of the best of his predecessors, I propose now to give you a brief account of his life and work.

Confucius[1]

When China's great philosopher was born in 551 B.C., the third historic dynasty, that of Chou, was wearing to its close. The blood which had coursed so vigorously in the veins of the martial Wu was running thin in the arteries of his degenerate descendants. The feudal system, founded to strengthen the Empire, had in the hands of weak monarchs reduced it to a congeries of warring States, awaiting the advent of China's Napoleon, Ch'in Shih Huang. He it was who, after the days of Confucius, built the famous Great Wall of China, and who was destined to break the power of the barons, and unite their mutually antagonistic territories into one great empire, an empire which, under different dynasties, has continued and increased to our own age.

Confucius, then, was born into a troubled period. The barons, more powerful than their nominal sovereign, encroached and made war upon each other, at the instigation of ministers even more crafty and ambitious

[1] *The Analects of Confucius*, by W. E. Soothill (The Mission Book Company, Shanghai).

than themselves. The suffering people were ground under the iron heel of the impost-gatherer, dragged from their fields and set to forced labour at and for the pleasure of their rulers, and driven to battles and raids in which they had no interest, and from which they derived no benefit. That this statement is not exaggerated is borne witness to by incidents in the life of the sage. Once, for instance, when he was passing by Mount T'ai, he is said to have heard the mournful wailing of a woman on the hill-side. Sending a disciple to inquire why she sat wailing in so lonely a spot, he was answered, 'My husband's father was killed here by a tiger, my husband also, and now my son has met the same fate.' 'Then why', asked Confucius, 'did she dwell in so dreadful a place?' 'Because', answered she, 'here there is no oppressive ruler.' 'Scholars,' said he to his disciples, 'remember this: oppressive rule is more cruel than a tiger.'

Power amongst these barons bred luxury, luxury lust, and lust unrelenting destruction. Princes there were who set all morality at defiance and lived lives of open shame, as witness the acceptance by the sage's own prince, the Duke of Lu, of a present of eighty singing girls, an act which drove our sage to throw up his office, shake the dust of his beloved native State off his feet, and depart to the life of a wanderer and an exile. Men of virtuous character, despairing of reformation, left their portfolios and withdrew from the world, becoming recluses amongst the mountains, or, far from the busy haunts of men, tilling a hard living from an earth kinder and sweeter than the hearts of princes. Some of these recluses, embittered by their sorrows, even poured scorn on Confucius for his futile attempts to stay the 'disorder which, like a swelling flood', rolled in resistless torrent through the land.

It must be remembered that the China of that period did not cover anything like half the territory included in the

China of to-day. It was limited to half a dozen of the northern provinces, and on the south barely crossed the Yangtse. The remainder of the country was thinly peopled with tribes of aborigines, who in later ages were gradually driven across the present borders, were absorbed, or still survive in the mountains of the south and west.

Such then was the China into which our sage was born. His ancestry by some is traced to Huang Ti, one of the mythical founders of the nation; at least there seems reason to believe that he was of noble descent. It would be gratifying to have no legendary phenomena to record connected with the sage's birth. They need not, however, be discussed here. Nor need we dwell on his youth and upbringing, save to note that during childhood he gave indications of his future tastes in a love for playing with sacrificial articles and in imitating the temple services.

His later career, hampered by conscience, was scarcely even moderately successful, death being necessary to appreciation. Though he lived to a ripe old age, travelled in many States, maintained his course in all honour, and won the reverence and love of his disciples, the princes of his day saw in him little but a pedantic philosopher with Arcadian notions impossible of realization. Only after his decease, in 479 B.C., did any of them recognize that the 'mountain' had indeed fallen, a mountain that the princes of the land from that day to this have been, with more or less failure, endeavouring with much acclamation to rebuild.

The habits of the sage may be learned from the tenth book of the *Analects*, where he is described by his disciples in all formality, his and theirs. His public bearing was punctilious to a degree, and in private he permitted himself no undue freedom, not even as to his mode of lying in bed. He was gracious and kindly, but never relaxed himself even to his son, to whom it is incredible to imagine him as ever amusing. His habits, and perhaps his character, may

be summed up in one sentence from Book x. 9: 'If his mat were not straight he would not sit on it.' He was a punctilious gentleman of the old school, to whom our modern laxity, not to say flippancy of manner, would have amounted to immorality.

As to his mental and moral attitude, we find him, as may be surmised from his habits just referred to, first and foremost a formalist. This word sublimates his character. His power of self-control was admirable, and duty was ever his loadstone. Of religious instincts from his childhood, religious he remained throughout his days. With too evenly balanced a mind to sympathize with the fantasies of the superstitious, he maintained a mental attitude towards the unseen world which was respectful but never familiar, reverent but never fervent. Knowing God only as a Majesty and never as a Father, the spring of his affections could not bubble joyously forth, indeed such joy would have seemed to him frivolity, and while he was not without true affection, yet expression of affection he deemed it the part of a philosopher rigorously to confine.

To a rigid and estimable code of honour he united an urbanity and courtesy which made a profound impression upon his followers, and which failed not to influence men in more exalted station; but his honour ever prevented his courtesy from degenerating into sycophancy, even for the sake of advancing his public principles, much less his private welfare. His moral life remained untainted in the midst of a corrupt generation, in which vice flaunted itself in the open, and virtue shrank abashed and in despair.

His doctrines, though they chiefly relate to the relationships between man and man, are far from destitute of an element higher than mere humanity. The powers of the unseen world have their acknowledged part in controlling the spirit of man in his duty to his fellows. God, the Supreme Ruler, is recognized as a Being to be

revered and worshipped. He it is who has produced the order of the universe, and decreed the various classes of mankind. Associated with Him are a multitude of spirits, who have their distinctive spheres in the direction of affairs celestial and terrestrial, and by these the good are guided and protected. The spirits of a man's forefathers are also and especially to be worshipped, as if they were present, a worship upon which the well-being of society is dependent. There is room in such a system for unlimited multiplication of gods and spirits, with the natural consequence that the national, and therefore in a sense Confucian, deities of China, altogether apart from the Taoist and Buddhist cults, have become legion.

Sacrifices, propitiatory rather than expiatory, are ordained for approaching the object of worship, for with empty hands it were unseemly to come. Virile sentiments are given utterance to in connexion with such offerings, and it is recognized that the spirit in which the worshipper presents them is of higher value than the gifts themselves.

That Jesus Christ will ultimately stay the rivers of blood annually shed in sacrifice throughout the Empire, and therewith the idolatry and superstition of China, is merely a question of time and faithful service; but may we not admit that the sacrifices retained and handed down by Confucius have kept open the way of approach to the abode of the Divine until the great Day of Atonement?

Sin and its punishment are acknowledged, the punishment being looked for in the present rather than in a future state of existence. Reformation from wrong-doing is required, rather than penitence and appeal for remission. Prayer is recognized as a duty, and as acceptable and efficacious; but it is not daily prayer, or a sanctifying communion with the Divine. It is rather an attitude of mind, or a formal sacrifice, which should be preceded by fasting and bathing. No priesthood or mediator is required,

the worshipper being his own priest, and the sacrifice his medium of acceptance; yet, in a sense, the Emperor is the high-priest for his people, the officer for his district, and the father for his household. But the regulations for ceremonial sacrifices are many, and therefore, on great occasions, a director, or master of ceremonies, is needful for order. Only the Emperor may offer the State sacrifices to Shang Ti, the Over-King, but the ear of Heaven is open to the cry of all, even of the repentant evil-doer. A future life is not denied, though Confucius avoided the discussion of it; in a measure he confirmed it by his insistent demand for sacrificial remembrance of the ancestor, and his command to worship the ancestral spirits, as if they were present.

As to his ethical code it is excellent and practical, but by no means heroic. Prosaic and not poetic, it commands respect rather than admiration; indeed, both in its religious and moral aspects, the whole code of Confucius resembles the wintry silver of the moon rather than the golden glow and warmth of the sun. Nothing is left to the imagination, nothing stirs it, for to him the romantic would have been repugnant, and to turn the other cheek pusillanimity. He did not even rise to the height of Laotzŭ in advocating beneficence to enemies, for if he returned good for evil, what had he left to return for good? On the contrary he proclaimed the sacred duty of the vendetta, that a man ought not to live under the same heaven with the murderer of his father, ever need to seek a sword for the murderer of his brother, or live in the same State with the murderer of his friend.

The term 'to lie' does not occur, but he advocated earnestly the value of sincerity. His five cardinal virtues were kindness, rectitude, decorum, wisdom, and sincerity, and the prince was to be the exemplar of these virtues to his people. Indeed, in his teaching, the prince was the

Kindness, wisdom
rectitude sincerity
decorum

virtuoso for whom the song was written, and to which the people were the chorus, for it must always be remembered that Confucius was a courtier; hence, in his system, the gracious influences of virtue were to stream down from the lofty height of the Court to the lower level of the people. Morality and religious ceremonies were his panacea for all the many ills of his age. Alas! that the princes should have despised his panacea.

The highest point in his moral teaching was the golden rule negatively stated: 'What you do not like yourself do not extend to others.' Asked to sum up his code in one word, he chose the term 'shu', which Dr. Legge translates reciprocity, but which seems to mean more than this, for reciprocity means, Do as you are done by, whereas 'shu' suggests the idea of following one's better nature, that is, Be generous—a nobler sentiment, though lacking the life-blood of the crowning word of Christianity.

Duty to parents, continued after death to a degree that is an unjust tax on the life of the living, a tax impossible of redemption save to the very few, takes the leading place in the religion and ethics of the Sage. Respect for elders follows in its train. Adultery is described somewhere as the chief of sins, though Mencius considers that for a man to die leaving no son to serve the family altar is the chief sin. Loyalty both to prince and friend is inculcated, as also conscientiousness in all one's doings. Rectitude and self-control, courtesy and moderation, find also a notable place. Neither riches nor culture compare with moral character, which takes precedence in value of all mundane honours, and what constitutes the excellence of a neighbourhood is not its wealth, but its virtue. Virtue and religious observances are a greater renovating power than punishments. Character will out; it cannot be concealed. Prejudice is to be avoided, and an unbiased judgement to be cultivated. Only the truly virtuous can be trusted

to love and to hate. The ready of tongue are unreliable.

In conclusion, neither pleasure, nor honours, nor wealth are the *summum bonum*, but virtue, for it is the foundation of true happiness; and virtue is to be attained through the energy of the individual will.

But the aim of Confucius was not so much the renovation of the individual as the renovation of the State; his mind and object were ethico-political, his desire the renaissance of the golden age of antiquity through a return to the virtue of primitive times. Therefore, as already remarked, the prince as father of his people must take the lead, and as the rivers that make fruitful the land take their rise on the mountain-tops, so moral renovation must begin at the summit of the State. Alas! the mountain-tops were waterless, and what our Sage was able to pour upon them rapidly distilled in so rare a moral atmosphere; for if the rich shall hardly enter into the realm of moral nobility, how much less shall princes, degenerating generation by generation through the allurements of luxury and lust, be able to filter the vitalizing waters of moral chastity to the thirsty souls of their people? On these arid heights Confucius failed, for even in his own State, when the indications were most hopeful for success, the eighty singing girls sent to entice the prince proved more potent than the lofty virtue of the Sage, and in the end it was in the hearts of his poorer disciples that his doctrines found their early and more hardy growth, rather than in the Courts of the great.

Though failure dogged his wandering footsteps while with men, his philosophy was not allowed to die, and notwithstanding that it has never satisfied the people at large, as witness the success of Taoism and Buddhism, it appeals to the conservative and educated element, and has become both the base and summit of Chinese religion and

morals. A man who has lived so long in the esteem and affections of a huge nation cannot but be classed amongst the mightiest forces of the past. Nevertheless, his inferiority to Moses, who lived a thousand years before him, either as legislator, administrator, moral philosopher, or religious seer, is manifest to those who are willing to study the Pentateuch, and his own writings, as well as those of his disciples, lack that throbbing pulse of divinity which has made the history, poetry, and soul-inspiring prophecy of the Old Testament live with perennial vitality. Despite a limited vision and an inelastic nature, Confucius nobly did his best to benefit humanity with what inferior material in history, poetry, and ritual he had to his hand; and the missionary and the student may well be profoundly grateful to him for rescuing so much of varied interest and value from the rapacious maw of destructive Time, and the more barbarous hands of ignorant men.

In addition to the five canonical records edited by Confucius, the Chinese now count amongst their sacred writings the Ssŭ Shu, or Four Books—namely, the Great Learning, of which the brief text is by Confucius, and the commentary by one of his disciples; the Doctrine of the Mean, being the Sage's teaching on the golden mean, compiled by a disciple; the Analects, or Sayings of Confucius, compiled by his disciples, or their disciples; and the Book of Mencius, said to have been compiled by Mencius himself.

In 212 B.C. Ch'in Shih Huang, the Napoleon of China, an enemy of the Confucian type of philosophy, sought out and destroyed all the books of this class that he could find. In 195 B.C. Kao Ti overthrew the short-lived Ch'in dynasty, visited the tomb of Confucius, and offered an ox. In A.D. 1 the Sage was canonized as 'Duke Ni, the all complete and illustrious'. In A.D. 57 sacrifices were ordered to be offered to him in conjunction with Duke Wên, until then

the beau idéal of the Chou dynasty. In 492 he was styled 'the venerable Ni, the accomplished Sage'. In 609 his shrine was separated from that of Duke Wên, and a temple was erected to him at every centre of learning. In 657 he was styled 'K'ung, the ancient Teacher, the perfect Sage', at which his title has remained to this day. All through the centuries his sacrifices were of the second grade, until 1907, the year of the Centenary of Protestant Missions in China, when the late Empress-Dowager raised him to the first grade, thus ranking him with Shang Ti. This was her reply to the Western deification of Jesus Christ. During recent years there has been more open and severe criticism of the Sage than ever in history. The present Republican Government is strongly opposed to many of his political sentiments, and his books are no longer taught in the schools as of yore. The young men of to-day count him as a 'back number', but—he is not dead.

Despite his best endeavours, Confucius failed to fill the office of a great religious leader, for he failed to guide his people out of an animism or polytheism doomed to end in limitless superstition, up to the unity he sought—the One True Infinite God, the Creator, the Adorner, the Father. The day is already dawning when the soul of this race will demand its rightful share in the nobler truth which the mind of Confucius but dimly apprehended, and which will relegate him to the honourable position no Christian will gainsay, of chief classical master and moral philosopher of this potentially great nation.

Mencius

The disciples of Confucius are said to have numbered three thousand. If there be any truth in this figure, it would probably include all who attended his school in the various States he visited during his sixty years of teaching. Of these disciples, seventy-two are said to have been his

more immediate followers. Only thirty-six of these are named in the Analects, of whom some half a dozen hold positions of especial prominence. These last, or their disciples, were responsible for the compilation of the Analects, or the Sayings of Confucius, and to two of them we are indebted for the Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean, two of the four books which form the immediate classics of the school of Confucius, as distinguished from the five ancient classics which he himself edited. We need not stay to discuss these disciples, but pass on to Mencius, whose work is the fourth of the Four Books.

Mencius is the latinized form of Mêng Tzŭ, the philosopher Mêng. Little is known of him beyond what appears in his book. His birth is placed in 372 B.C., a hundred years after the death of Confucius. He is said to have attained the age of eighty-four years, dying in the year 289 B.C. Dr. Legge says, 'The first twenty-three years of his life thus synchronized with the last twenty-three of Plato's. Aristotle, Zeno, Epicurus, Demosthenes, and other great men of the West, were also his contemporaries. When we place Mencius among them, he can look them in the face. He does not need to hide a diminished head,'—a somewhat generous estimate.

He was born in the north-east of China, in the State of Tsou, the immediate neighbour of the Lu State, his early life thus being spent near to the birthplace of his great master, Confucius. His father died while he was young, but he was brought up by his mother, one of the admirable women of China. Every schoolboy knows that the mother of Mencius 'thrice' removed her dwelling for the sake of her son.

Living at first near a cemetery, the child amused himself by imitating the mourners. 'This is no place for my son,' said his mother, so she removed to a house in the market-place. Here he took to playing the shopkeeper,

'vaunting his wares, and chaffering with customers'. Dissatisfied with the influence these surroundings were having on her son's character, she again removed, this time close to a school. Here the observant, imitative child took to copying the deportment taught to the scholars. 'This is the proper place for my son,' said the mother, and there they remained.

One day the butchers were killing some pigs close at hand, when the inquisitive boy asked why they were killing them. 'For food for you,' was the hasty answer. Realizing immediately that this was not true, and fearing to teach him to be untruthful, she went out and bought some of the pork. But the most famous of her lessons is the cutting of the web she was weaving. One day when he returned from school, to which he had been sent after he was grown, she asked him how he had progressed. In an indifferent manner he replied, 'Oh, well enough.' Taking a knife she instantly slit her warp across. Alarmed by such an extraordinary act, he ventured to ask what it meant, whereupon she showed him that she had only done to the piece she was weaving what he was doing to his life—and the lesson stood in need of no repetition.

It is said that he was the pupil of disciples of Tzŭ Ssŭ, the grandson of Confucius. All that we know for certain is what he himself says: 'Although I could not be a disciple of Confucius himself, I have endeavoured to cultivate my character and knowledge by means of others [who were].' Like his great master he spent his days in the Courts of kings and rulers, whose government he sought to rectify by the inculcation of moral and political ideals based on those of Confucius. In old age he is said to have given himself over to the compilation of his book, being assisted in the task by disciples of his school. His mind and teaching were ethico-political, or even politico-

religious. His book reveals an outspokenness creditable to his courage, and an insight indicative of outstanding ability.

Between the days of Confucius and those of Mencius, who represent the conservative school, the independent thinkers classed by them as heterodox, and whose characteristics almost justify their classification with the Taoist school, had indulged in speculations of a varied order. Amongst others, Yang Tzŭ had advocated a species of anarchy in the shape of individualism, or every man a law to himself. Moh Tzŭ had preached a form of communism in which universal love was to be the solvent of all human distresses. Hsün Tzŭ and his school had declared the nature of man to be evil, as against the accepted theory that man is by nature good, a doctrine arising out of the theory that Heaven, which is itself good, has bestowed upon man his nature, and could not, therefore, have bestowed a bad nature upon him. It was into an age philosophically more advanced than that in which Confucius lived that Mencius was born, and in consequence philosophical ideas are introduced into his discussions with greater freedom than his master had allowed to himself, for to him speculation was unprofitable and even dangerous.

To summarize the teachings of Mencius is to spoil them of their interest, but briefly, and in so far as they concern our present subject, they are as follows.

Like Confucius he recognizes a Supreme Power above men, and again like Confucius he employs the impersonal term Heaven to indicate this Power. Only three times does he use the personal term, Shang Ti, and in two of the cases as a quotation from the older classics. Heaven is the Cause of causes, the First Cause. Man's nature is of Heaven's conferring. It is therefore good in essence, but this goodness requires constant cultivation in order

to its maintenance and development. To some, by natural capacity, such cultivation is easier than to others, but all men are called to and capable of virtue. Men, it is true, are evil in practice, but they recognize their evil deeds as contrary to their Heaven-bestowed instincts. Even the evil man, if he mourn and purify himself, may serve God (Shang Ti). Thus repentance towards God and the cultivation of virtue are clearly demanded. Heaven has also subordinated the people under princes and leaders, who should assist God, that is, not only in governing the people, but in leading them in the right way. When they cease to do so, they may be deposed, for the people are chief, the tutelary deities secondary, and the prince least of all.

Mencius follows Confucius in maintaining the State sacrifices to Heaven, and to the Nature spirits or tutelary deities, and of course also to the ancestors. But he concerns himself less with sacrifices than with the inculcation of morals, which are those of his master. In like manner he concerns himself little with the future destiny of man, for while not denying a future life—indeed, tacitly recognizing it in the offices for the dead—he limits his attention to the duties of the present rather than the possibilities of the future life.

With this all too brief a consideration of the teaching of one who is counted only secondary to his great master, I must leave him, and close with a reference to another epoch-making follower of this school.

Chu Tzŭ

Since the days immediately following the Confucian period three great schools of commentators have arisen. The first of these was during the Han dynasty (206 B.C. to A.D. 220); the second and greatest was during the Sung dynasty (A.D. 960–1278); and the third during the late

Ts'ing, or Manchu dynasty (A. D. 1644–1912). Chu Hsi, that is, Chu Tzŭ, or the philosopher Chu, lived during the Sung dynasty, from 1130–1200. An omnivorous reader, in his early days he studied both Taoist and Buddhist books, and it is also probable that he may have become acquainted with Mohammedan and Nestorian ideas. The greater part of his life, however, was devoted to a study of the ancient classics and of the works of the Confucian school. Certain it is that his voluminous commentaries on these works and his philosophical treatises have been the orthodoxy of China for seven hundred years. For, while his views have been severely criticized by some eminent writers of the late dynasty, they have remained the authoritative standard for the nation.

He maintained the doctrine of Confucius and Mencius in regard to the innate goodness of man, and supported the Confucian code of State sacrifices. Indeed, he faithfully endeavoured to maintain all the standards laid down by his master. The accusation has been laid against him that he denied the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. For instance, he describes Heaven as Law, and this definition has undoubtedly influenced the minds of many of his fellow countrymen towards agnosticism. Nevertheless, in other places he is by no means either atheistic or agnostic, as may be seen in his commentaries. Perhaps his position will be made more clear by the following quotation from Dr. Giles:

'In one passage Chu Hsi uses language which will not bear misconstruction:

'"The blue empyrean, which we call T'ien, and which revolves unceasingly, is that and nothing more. To declare, as people do, that it contains a Being who awards punishments for crimes is impossible; such statements are without authority, and there is no evidence to that effect."

'It is, however, a mistake—and one which I have made myself—to think that Chu Hsi denied altogether the existence of an unseen Power. When speaking of the occurrence of the term T'ien in the Confucian Canon, he says that—

'"It must be interpreted as the sky, sometimes as a Chu-tsai (a Ruler, or Governor), and sometimes as a principle."

'And in another place he says that all unseen powers or influences may be gathered under the heading T'ien. To one who asked him if there was any return after death, he replied categorically:

'"When we go, that is all; how can matter which has once been dissipated ever be brought together again?"'[1]

In this clause Chu Tzŭ may have been referring rather to apparitions and ghosts than to the continued existence of the disembodied spirit. Extremely little of his work has been translated into English, nor has it ever been thoroughly studied by Europeans. In the meantime, therefore, it is well to reserve one's judgement, but there seems justification for saying that he added nothing to the religious life of his nation, but rather encouraged that kind of agnosticism which is the enemy of research and knowledge.

Since writing the above, further study of the works of Chu Tzŭ and the recent publication by Dr. J. P. Bruce of his *Philosophy of Human Nature, Chu Hsi*, have left me indisposed to emphasize this position. He was a philosopher, not a religious leader, and the fixation of his philosophy was due less to him than to the intellectual sterility of his successors in the Confucian School.

The question has been much discussed of late, especially amongst the Chinese, whether Confucianism is a religion, or merely a philosophy. So far as Confucius is concerned,

[1] *Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions*, vol. i, p. 109 (Clarendon Press).

no one will maintain that he was a religious founder such as Moses or Mohammed, but that he was eminently a religious leader seems evident; for he found in existence a decadent religion, restored it as far as he could according to earlier models, himself observed it, devotedly advocated its observance, and based the whole of his system on such observance. His recognition of an invisible Power or powers, originating and controlling man's destiny, and of man's relationship and duty thereto, his strenuous advocacy of sacrifice and obedience to those powers, his insistence upon the worship of the departed 'as if they were present', and the ritual which he at least edited, all single him out as something more than a mere philosopher, and give him a place as a religious leader. As a spiritual force Confucianism is not, and never has been, vital, for it is spiritually pulseless and unemotional, and its tendency towards agnosticism is a fatal barrier to true philosophy, whose very life-breath is research and inquiry, even into that which seems unknowable.

LECTURE III

TAOISM: LAO-TZŬ, CHUANG-TZŬ, AND THEIR SCHOOL

I HAVE now to introduce you to the founders of a cult very different from that which was evolved by Confucius. In Confucius there appears none of the abandon which lends attraction to Laocius and his immediate followers. From the unbroken plain of human duty and formal observance we soar at once to the mountain peak and gaze into an unplumbed abyss of mystery and speculation. *Here* are wonder and enchantment. *There* the daily round, the common task. Here are also the slippery path, the precipice, the fearful fall, the mocking sprite, the jeering demon; and while the followers of Confucius have walked with safer feet, those of Laocius have slipped and slid, and the sprite and the demon have seized upon and bewildered them, so that no longer do they thrill at the splendour of the height or the majesty of the deep, but dwell in fear of the demons which have enmeshed them.

LAOCIUS

Little is known of Laocius. His very existence has been disputed. One Sinologue denies the authenticity of his only book, the Tao Tê Ching; another declares that its contents were formulated under Buddhist influence, and that the names of its putative author show that, by Laocius, Buddha is meant.[1] The historic personality of Laocius is, however, generally accepted, the date of his birth being placed in 604 B. C. Into the numerous legends concerning

[1] *Early Chinese History*, by H. J. Allen (S.P.C.K.).

his birth we need not enter. It is recorded that Confucius, his junior by fifty years, had an interview with him in his extreme old age. The old philosopher is reported to have treated his youthful visitor with a certain amount of austerity, bidding him, 'Put away, sir, your proud air and many desires, your plausibility and ungoverned will. These are of no advantage to you.' The account of the interview is not enlightening, but Confucius is said to have remarked afterwards: 'I know how birds fly, fishes swim, and animals run. Yet the runner may be snared, the swimmer hooked, and the flyer shot. But there is the dragon. I cannot tell how he mounts on the wind through the clouds, and rises to heaven. To-day I have seen Laotzŭ, and can only compare him to the dragon.' Whether this interview is authentic is matter of doubt.

Laocius is said to have been a keeper of the Archives, or of the Treasury at the Imperial Court, and in old age to have withdrawn therefrom and set out for the West. On reaching the frontier, the warden of the pass besought him, before his withdrawal from the world, to commit his principles to writing for the benefit of humanity, and the Tao Tê Ching is said to have been the result. While its authenticity is disputed, its doctrines are the recognized basis of the primitive Taoist cult, and one may therefore believe that they represent views advocated by him, and that the book, if not of his own compilation, yet was handed down, with various additions, until it took the shape in which we now possess it. At least we have the work, and are assured it is a very old one, for its existence was known a century before our era. I will now endeavour to give you some idea of its contents.

The Tao Tê Ching

One fascinating word puzzles the student at the very outset--the word Tao. As I have already shown, it is

from this one word that the followers of the cult obtain their name of Taoist, and their cult of Taoism. The word itself was no new word in China, for it is quite clear that there were thoughtful men before Laocius who were searchers into and followers of Tao. Its meaning in brief is Way—THE WAY. In sound and meaning it bears a resemblance to the great word of Buddhism, Dharma, or Law, but the surmise of early Hindu influence in Taoism lacks support. Tao was used before the days of Laocius to describe the operations of Nature, and may be interpreted as meaning the Course or Way of Nature, or Natural Law.

One author translates it by 'God'; others by 'The Universal Supreme Reason' ('Raison suprême universelle'); 'The Great Way of the World' ('Grande Voie du Monde'); 'Logos'; 'The Way'; and by 'Nature'. Some leave it untranslated. It seems, indeed, impossible to find its exact equivalent in Western languages. Before meeting with Mr. Watters' term 'Nature', I had endeavoured to apply it to the varying uses of Tao, and, as I have stated, if it be used with a capital letter for Tao in its absolute conception, and with a small letter for tao in its relative or concrete expressions, 'Nature' and 'nature' approach to the meaning. If you can also conceive of the idea, in the pantheistic sense, of a Power, 'a Power that makes for righteousness,' immaterial, indefinable, eternal, ubiquitous, which finds differential expression in multitudinous forms, or powers, then you will have some conception of the idea which Laocius seems to be striving to exhibit. In this sense, translating freely by using the word Power instead of Way, we might interpret the opening phrase of the Tao Tê Ching thus:

'The Power which can be defined is not the eternal Power; the name by which it can be named is not its eternal name. When nameless, it is the origin of the

universe (literally the heavens and the earth); when it has a name, it is the genetrix (mother) of all things. Therefore (only he who is) ever passionless may behold its mystery. (He who is) ever subject to his passions may (only) see its external manifestations. These two things (i.e. the mysterious or immaterial, and the manifestation, or material) differ in name, but are the same in origin. Their unity is a deep, a deep of deeps, it is the portal of all mystery.'

He speaks of Tao as invisible, inaudible, and intangible; as without substance, yet containing within it all substance; as all-producing, all-pervading, all-nourishing, and all-perfecting. It is formless, yet comprehends all possible forms. He tells us that man follows the laws of earth, earth of Heaven, Heaven of Tao, and Tao of spontaneity. Tao therefore is a law to itself. While the Tao considered as immutable or eternal has no name, when it has produced order, or phenomena, it becomes nameable. In its nature it is calm, void, solitary, and unchanging; in operation it revolves through the universe of being, acting everywhere, but acting mysteriously, spontaneously, and without effort. It is the primal cause of the universe, and is the model or rule for all creatures, but chiefly for man. It represents also that ideal state of pristine perfection in which all things acted harmoniously and spontaneously, and when good and evil were unknown; the return to that condition constitutes the *summum bonum* of the philosophy of Laocius.

Tao enters therefore into human life as a moral principle in the form of Tê or virtue—hence the name Tao Tê Ching, or Classic of Tao and Tê. The virtuous man always seeks to conform in all things to Tao, but, like Tao, he does so without striving. Like water he is always humble, seeking the lowest place, yet water, the softest thing in the world, can dissolve its hardest things. Since

Tao is opposed to strife, Laocius advocates the policy of inaction, that is non-interference or quietism. It naturally follows from this quietist spirit that the doctrine of requiting injury with kindness, for which Confucius had no use, finds clear expression, and that war is abhorrent. The general who has slain a multitude ought to weep and wail, and wear sackcloth.

Such are some of the ideas found in the brief treatise attributed to Laocius. The terseness of its style renders it extremely difficult not only to translate, but to understand. He often seems to be struggling to express thoughts too deep for his vocabulary. For the nobility of his contribution to the missionary purpose of revealing to men their spiritual possibilities, we way well pay him our homage of gratitude. Despite its excesses and deficiencies the Tao Tê Ching is deserving of a more prominent place in a missionary's curriculum than it has hitherto been granted.

To sum up then, Laocius presents us with an impersonal Tao, that is to say, an impersonal Principle or Power, which, viewed in the absolute sense, is inscrutable, indefinable, and impossible to name. Viewed in the relative sense, it appears under many guises and in every part of the universe. It cannot be correctly translated as God. Indeed, in one obscure passage he says, 'It appears to have been before God.' Tao is, however, the source and support of all things. Calmly, without effort, and unceasingly, it works for good; and man by yielding himself to it, unresisting, unstriving, may reach his highest well-being. Suffering is the result of man's departure from the Tao state of pristine innocence and simplicity. It would be well to give up all study and the pursuit of knowledge, and return to the absolutely simple life of Tao. War, striving, suffering, would then all cease, and, floating along the placid river of time, the individual in due course would be absorbed in the ocean of Tao.

Pope's lines, as Watters has pointed out, are very similar in their sentiment to the teaching of the Chinese sage who lived more than two thousand years before him:

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, nature the soul;
That, changed through all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth, as in the ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent,
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart.
To IT no high, no low, no great, no small,
IT fills, IT bounds, connects, and equals all.

CHUANG-TZŬ

As Socrates had his Plato, Confucius his Mencius, Buddha his Ashvagosha, and our Lord his Paul, so Laocius had his Chuang-tzŭ. Mencius and Chuang-tzŭ, who were contemporaries, are the two most brilliant writers of antiquity, perhaps of all Chinese history, and Chuang-tzŭ (so little read) in imaginative power the greater of the two. There is a depth of sincerity wedded to a paradoxical quaintness, a spirit of humour allied to an incisiveness of argument, which in both of them remind one of Plato's Dialogues.

The two best versions of Chuang-tzŭ are those of Dr. Giles and Dr. Legge. Both should be read—that of Professor Giles first, for the pleasure it will give; that of Professor Legge afterwards or alongside, as an advisable corrective, especially in regard to terms which are fundamental. In Dr. Giles's version there is a valuable introductory chapter by Canon Aubrey Moore, in which the philosophy of Chuang-tzŭ is compared with that of Greece, especially with the teachings of Heracleitus.[1]

[1] *Chuang Tzŭ, Mystic, Moralist, and Social Reformer*, by H. A. Giles (Quaritch, 1889, 10*s*.).

Just as the pages of Mencius are less laconic than those of his master, so is it with Chuang-tzŭ. The well-nigh incomprehensible terseness and abstruseness of Laocius are amplified in the pages of his disciple with a wealth of interesting and amusing incident which add to their fascination.

What, then, are the teachings of Chuang-tzŭ? His first chapter is given up to an exposure of the uselessness of mere sense knowledge, and the relativity of time and space.

'This doctrine of relativity, which is commonplace in Greek as it is in modern philosophy, is made the basis, both in ancient and modern times, of two opposite conclusions. Either it is argued that all sense knowledge is relative, and sense is the only organ of knowledge, therefore real knowledge is impossible; or else the relativity of sense knowledge leads men to draw a sharp contrast between sense and reason and to turn away from the outward in order to listen to the inward voice. The one alternative is scepticism, the other idealism. In Greek thought the earliest representatives of the former are the Sophists, of the latter Heracleitus.

'There is no doubt to which side of the antithesis Chuang-tzŭ belongs. His exposure of false and superficial thinking looks at first like the destruction of knowledge. Even Socrates was called a Sophist because of his destructive criticism and his restless challenging of popular views. But Chuang-tzŭ has nothing of the sceptic in him.'[1]

In the second chapter, on the identity of contraries, he maintains with Heracleitus that all things are one, for

Sacred Books of the East: *The Texts of Taoism*, by James Legge (Clarendon Press, 1891, 21*s*.).

I am indebted to the above works for the translations which follow, but have taken the liberty of making certain alterations.

[1] Aubrey Moore in Giles, p. xix.

Taoism—Confucianism also—is essentially monistic. All is 'embraced in the obliterating unity of Tao', and the wise man, 'passing into the realm of the Infinite, finds rest therein'. The uninitiated, 'guided by the criteria of their own mind, see only the contradiction, the manifoldness, the difference; the sage sees the many disappearing in the one, in which subjective and objective, positive and negative, here and there, somewhere and nowhere, meet and blend.'

In order that you may be able to form an opinion for yourselves of his view of Tao, and that you may make the acquaintance of this great Chinese mystic, I will give you a number of quotations. He says:

'Tao, though possessed of feeling and power of expression, is passive (or effortless) and formless. It can be transmitted yet not received, apprehended yet not seen. Its root is in itself (i.e. it is self-existent), having continued from of old before heaven and earth existed. It is Tao which makes the spirits spirits, and which makes God a spirit; it produced heaven and produced earth. It was above the T'ai-chi (i.e. the primordial mass, or *ovum mundi*, out of which the universe was formed), yet may not be deemed high; it was below the T'ai-chi, yet may not be deemed deep; it was before the production of heaven and earth, and yet may not be deemed of long duration; it is older than the highest antiquity, yet may not be so considered (i.e. it is independent of the relations of time and space). Hsi Wei obtained it, and arranged (perhaps in the sense of discovered and described) the order of the universe. Fu Hsi got it, and so came into the possession of the principles of the ether (ch'i mu, air mother, possibly the seasons). The Pole-star got it, and from of old has never wandered from its place. The sun and the moon got it, and have never remitted (their shining). K'an P'i got it (the god of the K'un-lun range, who has a man's face and

an animal's body), and so acquired possession of the K'un-lun mountains. Fêng I (the Water god) got it, and so rambles over the great streams. Chien Wu (the god of Mount T'ai) got it, and so dwells on Mount T'ai. Huang Ti (founder of the first dynasty) got it, and so ascended the clouds of heaven. Chüan Hsü (a legendary ruler) got it, and so dwells in the Dark Palace. Yu Ch'iang (the god of the north) got it, and was placed over the north. Hsi Wang Mu (the goddess of the west) got it, and has her throne over the western wild; (of which) none knows its beginning, none its end. P'êng Tsu got it, and lived from the days of Shun to those of the Five Chiefs (800 years). Fu Yüeh got it, and so became Minister to the Emperor Wu Ting, in a trice became master of the Empire, and now, charioted on the Milky Way, with Sagittarius and Scorpio for steeds, he takes his place among the stars.'[1]

Again:

'What there was before the universe, was Tao; Tao makes things what they are, but is not itself a thing. Nothing can produce Tao; yet everything has Tao within it, and continues to produce it without end.'[2]

In places Tao seems to be confused or interchanged with T'ien, Heaven, as in the following instance:

'The feet of a man on the earth tread but on a small space, but, going on to where he has not trod before, he traverses a great distance easily; so, man's knowledge is but small, but, going on to what he does not already know, he comes to know what is meant by Heaven. He knows it as The Great Unity; The Great Mystery; The Great Illuminator; The Great Framer; The Great Infinite; The Great Truth; The Great Determiner. This makes his knowledge complete. As The Great Unity, he comprehends it; as The Great Mystery, he unfolds it; as The Great Illuminator, he contemplates it; as The Great

[1] Legge, Pt. I, p. 243. [2] Legge, Pt. II, p. 72; Giles, p. 291.

Framer, it is to him the Cause of all; as The Great Infinite, all is to him its embodiment; as The Great Truth, he examines it; as The Great Determiner, he holds it fast.

'Thus Heaven is to him all; accordance with it is the brightest intelligence. Mystery has in this its pivot; in this is the beginning. Such being the case, the explanation of it is as if it were no explanation; the knowledge of it is as if it were no knowledge. (At first) he does not know it, but afterwards he comes to know it. In his inquiries he must not set to himself any limits, and yet he cannot be without a limit. Now ascending, now descending, then slipping from the grasp (the Tao) is yet a reality, unchanged now, as in antiquity, and always without defect: may it not be called that which is always capable of the greatest display and expansion? Why should we not inquire into it? Why should we be perplexed about it? With what does not perplex let us explain what perplexes, till we cease to be perplexed. So may we arrive at a great freedom from all perplexity.'[1]

The question of a First Cause is raised and discussed in the following manner:

'"Chi Chên", said Shao Chih (or Little Wit), "taught CHANCE;[2] Chieh Tzŭ taught CAUSATION. In the speculations of these two schools, on which side did right lie?"

'"The cock crows," replied T'ai Kung Tiao, "and the dog barks. So much we know. But the wisest of us could not say why one crows and the other barks, nor guess why they crow and bark at all.

'"Let me explain. The infinitely small is incomprehensible; the infinitely great is immeasurable. Chance and Causation are limited to the conditioned. Consequently, both are wrong. Causation involves a real existence.

[1] Legge, Pt. II, p. 112; Giles, p. 333.

[2] Chance, or, *moh wei*, means none did or caused, that is, no first cause; Causation, or, *huo shih*, some one caused, that is, a first cause.

Chance implies an absolute absence of any principle. To have a name and the embodiment thereof—this is to have a material existence. To have no name and no embodiment—of this one can speak and think, but the more one speaks the farther off one gets.

'"The unborn creature cannot be kept from life. The dead cannot be tracked. From birth to death is but a span; yet the secret cannot be known. Chance and Causation are but *a priori* solutions. When I seek for a beginning, I find only time infinite. When I look for an end, I see only time infinite. Infinity of time past and to come implies no beginning, and is in accordance with the laws of material existences. Causation and Chance give us a beginning, but one which is compatible only with the existence of matter. TAO cannot be existent. If it were existent, it could not be non-existent. The very name of TAO is only adopted for convenience' sake. (Legge translates this by, 'The name Tao is a metaphor, used for the purpose of description', and he rightly designates it a most important statement.) Causation and Chance are limited to material existences. How can they bear upon the infinite? Were language adequate, it would take but a day fully to set forth TAO. Not being adequate, we may talk all day and only explain material existences. It cannot be conveyed either by words or by silence. In that state which is neither speech nor silence (absorbed thought), its transcendental nature may be apprehended."'[1]

The impossibility of possessing Tao as one possesses a thing is discussed in the following paragraph:

'Shun asked (his tutor) Ch'êng, "Can one get Tao so as to have it for one's own?" "Your very body," replied Ch'êng, "is not your own. How should Tao be?" "If my body," said Shun, "is not my own, pray whose is it?" "It is the bodily form entrusted to you by Heaven and

[1] Legge, Pt. II, pp. 129-30; Giles, pp. 350-1.

Earth (or the Universe). Your life is not your own. It is a blended harmony, entrusted to you by Heaven and Earth. Your nature, constituted as it is, is not yours to hold. It is entrusted to you by Heaven and Earth to act in accordance with it. Your posterity is not your own. It is the exuviae entrusted to you by Heaven and Earth. You move, but know not how. You are at rest, but know not why. You taste, but know not the cause. These are the operations of the laws of Heaven and Earth. How then should you get Tao so as to have it for your own?"'[1]

Chuang-tzŭ frequently amuses himself by showing up Confucius at a disadvantage, often representing him as, in his ignorance, seeking enlightenment from Laocius or some other Taoist worthy. Here is one of several fictitious interviews in which Confucius is depicted as asking wisdom from Laocius:

'"To-day you are at leisure," says Confucius. "Pray tell me about perfect Tao." "Purge your heart by fasting and discipline," answers Lao Tzŭ. "Wash your soul as white as snow. Discard your knowledge. Tao is abstruse and difficult of discussion. . . . Man passes through this sublunary life as a white horse passes a crack. Here one moment, gone the next. Neither are there any not equally subject to the ingress and egress of mortality. One modification brings life; then another, and it is death. Living creatures cry out; human beings sorrow; the bow-sheath is slipped off; the clothes-bag is dropped; and in the confusion the soul wings its flight, and the body follows, on the great journey home.

'"The reality of the formless, the unreality of that which has form—this is known to all. Those who are on the road to attainment care not for these things, but the people at large discuss them. Attainment implies non-discussion; discussion implies non-attainment. Manifested,

[1] Legge, Pt. II, p. 62; Giles, pp. 281–2.

Tao has no objective value; hence silence is better than argument. It cannot be translated into speech; better, then, say nothing at all. This is called the great attainment."'[1]

To one who wished to localize Tao, as others have sought to localize the Kingdom of Heaven, Chuang-tzŭ replied in the following extreme fashion:

'Tung Kuo Tzŭ asked Chuang-tzŭ, "What you call Tao—where is it?" "There is nowhere where it is not," replied Chuang-tzŭ. "Tell me one place at any rate where it is," said Tung Kuo Tzŭ. "It is in the ant," replied Chuang-tzŭ. "Why go so low down?" asked Tung Kuo Tzŭ. "It is in a tare," said Chuang-tzŭ. "Still lower," objected Tung Kuo Tzŭ. "It is in a potsherd," said Chuang-tzŭ. "Worse still," cried Tung Kuo Tzŭ. "It is in ordure," said Chuang-tzŭ. And Tung Kuo Tzŭ made no reply. "Sir," continued Chuang-tzŭ, "your question does not touch the essential. When Huo, inspector of markets, asked the managing director about the fatness of pigs, the test was always made in parts least likely to be fat. Do not therefore insist in any particular direction; for there is nothing which escapes. Such is perfect Tao; and such also is ideal speech. Whole, entire, all, are three words which sound differently but mean the same. Their purport is ONE.

'"Try with me to reach the palace of Nowhere, and there, amidst the identity of all things, carry your discussions into the infinite. Try to practise with me inaction (i.e. absence of effort, passiveness, allowing Tao to work its will within us), wherein you may rest motionless, without care, and be happy. For thus the mind becomes an abstraction. It wanders not, and yet is not conscious of being at rest. It goes and comes, and is not conscious of barriers; backwards and forwards without being conscious of any goal; up and down the realms of

[1] Legge, Pt. II, p. 63; Giles, p. 282.

Infinity, wherein the greatest intellect would fail to find an end.

'"That which makes things the things they are, is not limited to such things. The limits of things are their own limits in so far as they are things. The limits of the limitless, the limitlessness of the limited—these are called fullness and emptiness, renovation and decay. Tao causes fullness and emptiness, but it is not either. It causes renovation and decay, but it is not either. It causes beginning and end, but it is not either. It causes accumulation and dispersion, but it is not either."'[1]

Again, Chuang-tzŭ depicts the manner in which an old Tao-imbued man taught another man, Pu-liang E, to enter Tao. The characters are probably fictitious. The novice is represented as a man of great ability and high character. The old Taoist is represented as of great age, yet with the complexion of a child, which he attributes to the influence of Tao, for the Taoist believes it possible to avoid both old age and death.

'"Pu-liang E had the abilities of a sage," says the old Taoist, "but not the Tao, while I had the Tao, but not his abilities. I wished, however, to teach him, if, peradventure, he might become a veritable sage. . . . Accordingly, I proceeded to do so, but by degrees. After three days, he was able to banish from his mind all worldly (matters). This accomplished, I continued my intercourse with him in the same way; and in seven days he was able to banish from his mind all thought of men and things. This accomplished and my instructions continued, after nine days he was able to account his life as foreign to himself. This accomplished, his mind was afterwards clear as the morning; and after this he was able to see his own individuality. That individuality apprehended, he was able to banish all thought of Past and Present (i.e. Time).

[1] Legge, Pt. II, pp. 66–7; Giles, pp. 285–7.

Freed from this, he was able to penetrate to (the truth that there is no difference between) life and death; (how) the destruction of life is not dying, and the communication of another life is not living. (The Tao) is a thing which accompanies all other things and meets them, which is present when they are overthrown, and when they obtain their completion. Its name is Tranquillity amid all disturbances, meaning that such disturbances lead to its Perfection."'[1]

Like Laocius, Chuang-tzŭ also taught that man had fallen from a primitive state of innocence, and that he could only regain his lost condition by discarding his so-called wisdom and artificial civilization. Thus in chapter ix he raises his protest against the artificiality of civilization and government, and asserts the superiority of primitive naturalness, illustrating his view by showing how much happier the horse is in its native condition, and how even the potter destroys the character of the clay, and the carpenter the tree by his interference with their original nature. Poh Loh dragged horses from their native wilds, branded and clipped them, pared their hoofs, haltered and shackled them, kept them confined in stables, and a third of them died. Then he kept them hungry and thirsty, trotted, galloped, groomed, and trimmed them, with the misery of bit and bridle in front, and the fear of the whip behind, and more than half of them died. In like manner, trees and even clay suffer at the hands of interfering 'skill'. Those who govern the Empire make the same mistake. For the people have certain Heaven-sent instincts, and interference with these is the cause of human misery.

'In the days when natural instincts prevailed, men moved quietly and gazed steadily. At that time there were no roads over mountains, nor boats, nor bridges over water. All things were produced each for its own proper sphere.

[1] Legge, Pt. II, pp. 245–6; Giles, p. 79.

Birds and beasts multiplied; trees and shrubs grew up. The former might be led by the hand; you could climb up and peep into the raven's nest. For then man dwelt with birds and beasts, and all creation was one. There were no distinctions of good and bad men. Being all equally without 'knowledge', their virtue could not go astray. Being all equally without evil desires, they were in a state of natural integrity, the perfection of human existence.

'But when sages appeared, tripping people over with 'charity', and fettering with 'duty to one's neighbour', doubt found its way into the world. And then with their gushing over (religious) 'music' and fussing over 'ceremonies', the Empire became divided against itself.

'Had the natural integrity of things been left unharmed, who could have made sacrificial vessels? Had the natural jade been left unbroken, who could have made libation-cups? Had Tao not been abandoned, who could have introduced charity and duty to one's neighbour? Were man's natural instincts his guide, what need would there be for (religious) music and ceremonies? . . . Destruction of the natural integrity of things, in order to produce articles of various kinds—this is the fault of the artisan. Annihilation of Tao in order to practise charity and duty to one's neighbour—this is the error of the Sage.

'Horses live on dry land, eat grass, and drink water. When pleased, they rub their necks together. When angry, they turn round and kick up their heels at each other. Thus far only do their natural dispositions carry them. But bridled and bitted, with a plate of metal on their foreheads, they learn to cast vicious looks, to turn the head to bite, to resist, to get the bit out of mouth, or bridle into it. And thus their natures become depraved—the fault of Poh Loh.'[1]

[1] Legge, Pt. I, pp. 276-7; Giles, pp. 107-8.

In like manner the people were innocent, until 'sages came to worry them with ceremonies and music in order to rectify them, and dangled charity and duty to one's neighbour before them in order to satisfy their hearts—then the people began to stump and limp about in their love of knowledge, and to struggle with each other in their desire for gain. This was the error of the sages.'

In that Golden Age of innocence the people 'were upright and correct, without knowing that to be so was righteousness; they loved one another, without knowing that to do so was benevolence; they were honest and leal-hearted, without knowing that it was loyalty; they fulfilled their engagements, without knowing that to do so was good faith; in their simple doings they employed the services of one another, without thinking that they were conferring or receiving any gift.'[1]

Consequently:

'The command of armies is the lowest form of virtue. Rewards and punishments are the lowest form of education. Ceremonies and laws are the lowest form of government. Music and fine clothes are the lowest form of happiness. Wailing and mourning are the lowest form of grief. These five should follow the movements of the mind.'[2]

'Perfect politeness is not artificial; perfect duty to one's neighbour is not a matter of calculation; perfect wisdom takes no thought; perfect charity recognizes no ties; perfect trust requires no pledges.' Therefore, 'Discard the stimuli of purpose. Free the mind from disturbances. Get rid of entanglements to virtue. Pierce the obstructions to Tao.'[3]

Again an old Taoist is represented as instructing Confucius. Of course the case is fictitious, but any one

[1] Legge, Pt. I, p. 325; Giles, p. 152.
[2] Legge, Pt. I, pp. 334–5; Giles, p. 162.
[3] Legge, Pt. II, p. 87; Giles, p. 307.

who compares the Analects and other Confucian books with the Tao Tê Ching and Chuang-tzŭ cannot fail to be struck with many features, best described as Taoistic, in both systems. The instruction in this case is supposed to be given by an old fisherman to Confucius, but the chapter is generally considered as of later composition. The fisherman rebukes Confucius for running after the shadows of external rites and forms, when happiness can only be found in the substance of Tao. He says:

'There was once a man who was so afraid of his shadow and so disliked his own footsteps that he determined to run away from them. But the oftener he raised his feet the more footsteps he made, and though he ran very hard, his shadow never left him. From this he inferred that he went too slowly, and ran as hard as he could without resting, the consequence being that his strength broke down and he died. He was not aware that by going into the shade he would have got rid of his shadow, and that by keeping still he would have put an end to his footsteps. Fool that he was!

'Now you (i.e. Confucius) occupy yourself with the details of charity and duty to one's neighbour. You examine into the distinction of like and unlike, the changes of motion and rest, the canons of giving and receiving, the emotions of love and hate, and the restraint of joy and anger. Yet you cannot avoid the calamities you speak of.'

Later he adds:

'Ceremonial is the invention of man. Our original purity is given to us by Heaven. It is as it is, and cannot be changed. Wherefore the true sage models himself upon Heaven, and holds his original purity in esteem. He is independent of human exigencies. Fools, however, reverse this. They cannot model themselves upon Heaven, and have to fall back on man. They do not hold original purity in esteem. Consequently they are ever suffering the

vicissitudes of mortality, and never reaching the goal. Alas! you, sir, were early steeped in deceit, and are late in hearing the great doctrine.'[1]

He has so little admiration for sages and their interfering ways that he even accuses them of being the cause of robbers:

'It was the appearance of sages', he says, 'which caused the appearance of robbers. Drive out the sages and leave the robbers alone—then only will the Empire be governed. As when the stream ceases the gully dries up, and when the hill is levelled the chasm is filled; so when sages are extinct, there will be no more robbers, but the Empire will rest in peace. On the other hand, unless sages disappear, neither will great robbers disappear; nor if you double the number of sages wherewithal to govern the Empire will you do more than double the profits of Robber Chê.'

In illustration of this he goes on to say:

'If pecks and bushels are used for measurement, they will also be stolen. If scales and steelyards are used for weighing, they will also be stolen. If tallies and signets are used for good faith, they will also be stolen. If charity and duty to one's neighbour are used for rectification, they will also be stolen.'[2]

In this respect also he attacks the revered founders of the Empire, Yao and Shun, the 'divine rulers' whom Confucius considered to be the model rulers for all time. He says:

'As to Yao and Shun, what claim have they to praise? Their fine distinctions simply amounted to knocking a hole in the wall in order to stop it up with brambles; to combing each individual hair; to counting the grains for a rice-pudding. How in the name of goodness did they profit their generation? . . . The struggle for wealth is so

[1] Legge, Pt. II, pp. 197–9; Giles, pp. 418–20.
[2] Legge, Pt. I, pp. 284–5; Giles, pp. 113–14.

severe. Sons murder their fathers; ministers their princes; men rob in broad daylight, and bore through walls at high noon. I tell you that the root of this great evil is from Yao and Shun, and that its branches will extend into a thousand ages to come. A thousand ages hence, man will be feeding upon man.'[1]

The man possessed by Tao is declared by him to rise above the fascination of wealth or possessions.

'He lets the gold lie hid in the hill, and the pearls in the deep; he considers not property or money to be any gain; he keeps aloof from riches and honours; he rejoices not in long life, and grieves not for early death; he does not account prosperity a glory, nor is he ashamed of indigence; he would not grasp at the gain of the whole world as his own private distinction. His distinction is in understanding that all things belong to the one treasury, and that death and life should be viewed in the same way. . . .

'He sees where there is the deepest obscurity; he hears where there is no sound. In the midst of the deepest obscurity, he alone sees and can distinguish; in the midst of a soundless (abyss), he alone can hear harmonies. Therefore, where one deep is succeeded by a greater, he can people all with things; where one mysterious range is followed by another that is more so, he can lay hold of the subtlest character of each. In this way, in his intercourse with all things, while he is farthest from having anything, he can yet give to them what they seek; while he is always hurrying forth, he yet remains in his resting-place.'[2]

Again Confucius is represented as bemoaning his failure, rejected by princes, forsaken by disciples and friends, and asking a Taoist philosopher why this should be. The reply he received was:

'Have you not heard how when the men of Kuo fled

[1] Legge, Pt. II, pp. 76–7; Giles, p. 296.

[2] Legge, Pt. I, pp. 309, 311; Giles, pp. 137, 139.

for their lives, one of them, named Lin Hui, cast aside most valuable regalia and carried away his child upon his back? Some one suggested that he was influenced by the value of the child; but the child's value was small. Or by the inconvenience of the regalia; but the inconvenience of the child would be much greater. Why then did he leave the (priceless) regalia and carry off the child? Lin Hui himself said, "The regalia involved a mere matter of money. The child was from Heaven." And so it is that in trouble and calamity mere money questions are neglected, while we ever cling to that which is from Heaven.'[1]

The principle of inaction, or quietism, does not exclude action. This we have clearly set out in the following statement:

'Therefore the true Sage looked up to Heaven, but did not (meddle with its course by) 'assisting' it; perfected himself in virtue without its embarrassing him; proceeded according to Tao without planning (and scheming); allied himself with virtue without trusting to it; pursued righteousness without laying it up; responded to ceremonies without tabooing them; undertook and did not withdraw from human affairs; adjusted their laws so as to be without confusion; trusted the people and did not slight them; made use of (men and) things and did not discard them; (while recognizing his own, or the things') insufficiency for doing, yet that there could be no not doing. For he who is not Heaven-enlightened will not be pure in character, he who is not Tao-imbued will not succeed, and he who is not Tao-enlightened—alas for him!

'What then is Tao? There is the celestial (or divine) Tao, and there is the human Tao. Inaction (i.e. effortlessness) with honour, that is the Tao of Heaven. Action (i.e. effort, striving) with (consequent) embarrassment, that is human Tao. (Of these) the celestial Tao means lordship,

[1] Legge, Pt. II, pp. 34–5; Giles, p. 253.

human Tao bondage (i.e. the condition of a servant, or slave). How far removed are the celestial Tao and the human Tao from each other! Let us clearly differentiate them.'[1]

As illustrating the foolishness of interfering with Tao, or Nature, the following piquant fancy is given:

'The ruler of the southern sea was called Shu (that is, Heedless). The ruler of the northern sea was called Hu (or Hasty). The ruler of the central zone was called Hun Tun (i.e. Chaos, that is not yet formed, or Formless). Heedless and Hasty often met on Hun Tun's territory, and being always well treated by him, determined to repay his kindness. They said, "All men have seven orifices—for seeing, hearing, eating, and breathing. Hun Tun alone has none. We will bore some for him." So every day they bored one hole; but on the seventh day Hun Tun died.'[2]

In the following remarkable saying regarding Tao, he seems to be describing it as creator, preserver, and destroyer, and he goes on to speak of the confidence of a man who knows and trusts in Tao, differentiating his (divine) joy from all others as of the highest. He says:

'My master! My master! (or, Teacher!) thou dost (or he does) break in pieces all things, and dost not account it cruelty; thou sprinklest favour on all generations without accounting it beneficent; thou art older than the highest antiquity, and accountest it not age; thou coverest and containest the universe, shaping all its forms, and countest it not for skill; this is the joy of Heaven (or divine joy).

'Therefore it has been said: "He who knows the joy of Heaven during his life proceeds (in accord) with Heaven, and his death is a transformation; quiescent, his character accords with Yin (the negative, or still element); active, he

[1] Legge, Pt. I, pp. 305–6; Giles, p. 134; Legge, Pt. I, p. 267.
[2] Giles, p. 98.

accords with the Yang (the positive, or active element), rising like the waves. Therefore, he who knows the joy of Heaven has no grievance against Heaven and no grudge against men; he is unembarrassed by things, and unrebuked by the spirits of the departed." Hence it has been said: "His doings (accord with) Heaven, his quiescence (accords with) earth, with a heart undisturbed he rules the world. Undismayed by the spirits of the departed, unharassed by their souls, with his heart undisturbed, all creation serves him." Which means that by his emptiness (lowliness) and quiescence he reaches through the universe, and communicates with all creation: this is the joy of Heaven. And this joy of Heaven is the heart (soul) of the sage, by which he nourishes (pastors) all under heaven (all the nation).'[1]

Here is an example of his mode of discussing the reality of knowledge and the perfect man:

'"Can then nothing be known?" asked a follower of Tao of his master.

'"How can I know?" was the reply. "Nevertheless I will try to tell you. How can it be known that what I call knowing is not really not knowing, and that what I call not knowing is not really knowing? Now I would ask you this. If a man sleeps in a damp place, he gets lumbago and dies; but how about an eel? And living up in a tree is precarious and trying to the nerves; but how about monkeys? Of the man, the eel, and the monkey, whose habitat is the right one, in the absolute? Human beings feed on flesh, deer on grass, centipedes on snakes, owls and crows on mice. Of these four, whose is the right taste, in the absolute? Monkey mates with monkey, the buck with the doe, eels consort with fishes, while as to Mao Ch'iang and Li Chi (two famous beauties), at the sight of them, fishes plunge deep down in the water, birds soar high in

[1] Legge, Pt. I, pp. 332–3; Giles, pp. 159-60.

the air, and deer hurry away. Yet who shall say which is the correct standard of beauty? In my opinion, the standard of human virtue, and of positive and negative, is so obscured that it is impossible actually to know it as such."

'"If you, then," asked the disciple, "do not know what is good or bad, is the perfect man equally without this knowledge?"

'His master replied, "The perfect man (i.e. the man who has reached the highest development) is a spirit. The wide waters might boil and he would not feel hot. The great rivers might freeze and he would not be cold. Hurrying thunderbolts might split the mountains, and storms throw up the ocean without making him afraid. In such case he (or such a one) would chariot himself upon the wind, driving the sun and moon, and roam beyond this earthly sphere, where death and life do not affect him, how much less such considerations as good and evil?"'[1]

Concerning the illusion of death he asks himself the following question:

'How do I know that the love of life is not a delusion? and that the dislike of death is not like a child that is lost and does not know the way home?'

Then he gives an instance of the bride of a prince, who saturated her dress with tears on leaving her home in the wilds, but after she had enjoyed the delights of the palace regretted that she had wept. And he asks, 'How do I know that the dead do not repent of their craving for (this) life?

'Those who dream of the banquet may wake to lamentation and sorrow; those who dream of lamentation and sorrow may wake to join the hunt. While they dream, they do not know that they dream. Some will even interpret the dream while they are dreaming; but only when they awake do they know it was a dream. By and

[1] Legge, Pt. I, p. 192; Giles, pp. 27–8.

by comes the Great Awakening, and then we shall find out that this life is really a great dream. Fools think they are awake now, and flatter themselves they know if they are princes or peasants. Confucius and you are both dreams; and I who say you are dreams—I am but a dream myself.'

Then follows his famous illustration, the butterfly dreams:

'Once upon a time, I, Chuang Chou, dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, a veritable butterfly, enjoying itself to the full of its bent, and not knowing it was Chuang Chou. Suddenly I awoke, and came to myself, the veritable Chuang Chou. *Now* I do not know whether it was then I dreamt I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man. Between me and the butterfly there must be a difference. This is an instance of transformation.'[1]

One of three friends, followers of Tao, died. Confucius is represented as sending a disciple, Tzŭ Kung, to see if he could render assistance. On reaching there Tzŭ Kung found the survivors pathetically strumming a lute and singing:

Ah! come back, Sang Hu. Ah! come back, Sang Hu.
Thou hast returned to thy true self again,
While we, as men, still here remain. Ah!

The disciple returned and asked Confucius the meaning of their conduct, to which he replied, 'These men seek their enjoyment outside this (worldly) sphere, while I seek mine within it. . . . They make man to be the fellow of the Creator, and seek their enjoyment in the ethereal universe, counting life as an appendage or a tumour, and death as an excision of the tumour. That being so, what do they know of what preceded life or follows death? . . . They occupy themselves ignorantly and vaguely with what (they think)

[1] Legge, Pt. I, p. 194; Giles, p. 29.

lies outside the dust and dirt of the world in the business of inaction (quiescence),' &c.

The disciple is represented as asking Confucius, 'Yes, but why do you, sir, follow (the ways of) this (mundane) sphere?'

Into the mouth of Confucius is put the strange reply, 'I am (here) under the condemning sentence of Heaven.'[1]

A follower of Tao lay gasping at the point of death, with his wife and children wailing about him. One of his friends went to see him and said to them, 'Hush! Get out of the way. Do not disturb him as he is passing through his change.' Then, leaning against the door, he said to the dying man, 'Great indeed is the Creator. What will He (or It) now make you become? Where will He (or It) take you to? Will He (It) now make you the liver of a rat, or a worm's arm (i.e. something non-existent)?'

The dying man replied, 'Wherever his parents tell a son to go he goes. Nature is more to a man even than his parents. When It hastens my death, if I do not obey, I shall be unfilial. What wrong can It do? The Great Cosmos has sustained me in this form, given me (useful) toil in life, ease in old age, and rest in death, and surely what has made my life a good will make my death a good. . . . When we once understand that the universe is a great smelting-pot, and the Creator a great founder, where can we go that will not be right?'[2]

In the chapter on 'Perfect Happiness'—which opens with the question, 'Is perfect happiness to be found on earth or not? Are there any who really *live*? If so, what do they do, what maintain, what flee from, what cleave to, what resort to, what avoid, what love, and what hate?'—we find the two following incidents.

'When Chuang-tzŭ's wife died, Hui Tzŭ went to condole

[1] Legge, Pt. I, p. 251; Giles, p. 83.
[2] Legge, Pt. I, p. 249; Giles, p. 82.

with him. Finding him squatted on the ground, drumming on a bowl and singing, he said, "When a wife has lived with a man, brought up his children, grown old and died, not to weep over her is bad enough—but to drum on a bowl and sing, surely this is beyond everything?"

'"Not so," replied Chuang-tzŭ. "Immediately on her death could I alone be different from others? But I reflected on her beginning before she had life. Not only had she then no life, but no form; not only no form, but no ether (spirit), but was mingled with the vast expanse. Then came a change, and she had ethereal existence (spirit); another change, and she had form; another change, and she was born. Now she has changed again and is dead. It is like the procession of the seasons. Here she lies, face upwards, asleep in the Great Chamber (the Universe), and were I to go about wailing and weeping her, it would be as if I did not put myself in line with my lot. Therefore I refrain."'

'When Chuang-tzŭ was in the State of Ch'u he saw an empty skull, bleached, but still retaining its shape. Tapping it with his riding-whip, he asked it, "Did you, sir, in your greed of life, fail in (the lessons of) reason and come to this? Or did you do so in the service of some perishing State, slain by an axe? Or was it through your evil conduct bequeathing disgrace to your parents, your wife, and your children? Or was it through the miseries of cold and hunger? Or was it that you had completed your years of life?"

'Having thus spoken, he took up the skull, made a pillow of it, and went to sleep. In the night the skull appeared to him in a dream, and said, "Your talk, sir, was like that of a philosopher, but all that you said had reference to the entanglements of mortal life. In death there are none of these. Would you like, sir, to hear me tell about death?" "I should," said Chuang-tzŭ, whereupon the skull

resumed, "In death there is no difference between prince and subject, and none of the duties of the four seasons. Flowing along, our years are those of the universe. No king on his throne has greater happiness than we have." Chuang-tzŭ did not believe it, and said, "If I were to get the Ruler of Life to restore your mortal shape, give you bones and flesh and skin, and restore you to your parents, your wife and children, and the acquaintances of your old home, would you like it?" At this the skull opened its eyes wide, knitted its brows, and said, "Would I give up the happiness of a throned king and undergo again the toils of mortality!"'[1]

When Chuang-tzŭ was dying, his disciples proposed to give him a sumptuous funeral, but he said, 'With heaven and earth for my coffin and catafalque, with the sun, the moon, and all the stars for my regalia, and with all creation to escort me, is not everything ready to hand? What could you add?'

Dr. Giles beautifully quotes from 'The Burial of Moses':

> And had he not high honour?—
> The hill-side for his pall;
> To lie in state while angels wait
> With stars for tapers tall;
> And the dark rock pines like nodding plumes
> Above his bier to wave,
> And God's own hand in that lonely land
> To lay him in the grave.

His disciples, however, argued, 'We fear the crows and kites will eat you, sir.' To which Chuang-tzŭ replied, 'Above, I shall be food for crows and kites; below, I shall be food for mole-crickets and ants. To rob one is to feed the other. Why this partiality?'[2]

[1] Legge, Pt. II, pp. 4–6; Giles, pp. 223–5.
[2] Legge, Pt. II, p. 212; Giles, p. 434.

And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking beings, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

That blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened:—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame,
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul,
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of Harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.[1]

The Débâcle of Taoism

Time fails to tell in detail of the downfall of Taoism. Instead of limiting itself to the mysticism of its master, and pursuing his reasonable speculations, it gave itself up, at an early date, to the magical side of Chinese philosophy and practice. It traces the origin of these magical arts back to Huang Ti, a famous legendary emperor, whose date is generally placed from 2697 to 2597 B.C. Indeed, the Taoists consider him to be the real founder of the magical side of their religion. But whether or not magic be the stock from which all religion and science have sprung, as Dr. Frazer has endeavoured to show, it may be taken for certain that Huang Ti (the Yellow Emperor) was not its founder in China, though he may have been a powerful wizard.

[1] Wordsworth, 'Tintern Abbey'.

A charge of wizardry or magic cannot be laid at the door of Laocius, and it is a pity that the lofty moral and spiritual teachings of Laocius and Chuang-tzŭ, teachings resembling those of the Buḍdha, proved to be beyond the capacity of their successors. Even in Chuang-tzŭ, and still more so in his supposed predecessor, Lieh Tzŭ, we find elements of the bizarre, men who could walk through the solid rock, leap down terrifying precipices unharmed, walk through fire unsinged, travel thousands of miles through the air absenting themselves for many days, men who did not die, but were translated, and so on. Whether they intended these statements to be accepted literally, or metaphorically, we know not. At least we know that subsequent generations took them literally, and for hundreds of years, nay, even to the present day, men have sought the elixir of immortality and the philosopher's stone. Taoist devotees to-day walk up ladders of swords, pass through blazing fire, push long needles through their cheeks, and impose on the people with their numerous fantasies. They are in demand for all the magic and sorcery in which the ignorant people put their trust. It is they who are called upon to clear the haunted house, to expel the demons which possess such multitudes, to rid a town of the cholera spirits, to pour magical curses on the thief, and to undertake the incantations for rain. From the days of Chang Tao Ling, whose descendant still rules as Taoist Pope in China, the principal occupation of the Taoist 'priest' has been that of wonder-working.

This man, more than any other, was the cause of the *débâcle* of Taoism. He is said to have been born in A.D. 34, during the Han dynasty, and to have been the descendant of Chang Liang, one of three heroes who helped to establish that dynasty, and who, after the enthronement of its first emperor, is said to have refused all reward and given himself up to the search after the

elixir of immortality. His descendant, Chang Tao Ling, is reputed to have possessed marvellous powers, finally to have discovered the elixir, become an immortal, and joined the genii. He bequeathed his secret to his son, and his descendant is still Patriarch or Pope of Taoism. It is either Chang Tao Ling or one of his descendants who was imperially deified in A.D. 1116 as Yü Huang Shang Ti, commonly known as the Pearly Emperor, who is confused by the people with the true Shang Ti, or God. From the days of Chang Tao Ling, the progress of Taoism has been downwards. The Pope is imperially consulted as year by year fresh saints or gods are added to the Pantheon, and there can be little doubt that the retention of the people in the slavery of superstition is attributable chiefly to the influence of Taoism in general and its Pope in particular.

For convenience' sake I have included what we might almost call the fourth religion of China, namely, the deification of national worthies and their appointment as tutelary divinities, under the heading of Confucianism. In reality we may consider the origin and development of this cult as largely due to Taoist influence, even though Taoists, equally with Confucianists, lay no claim to those divinities as their own. The chief divinities of Taoism at the present day are the Trinity of the Three Pure Ones, namely, Laocius, P'an-ku (Chaos, or the Demiurge), and the above-named Yü Huang Shang Ti.

The numerous secret societies, which have honeycombed the nation, for the most part have been associated with Taoism. The Boxer madness is the latest instance of this. Thousands and hundreds of thousands believed that, possessed of Taoist charms, weapons could not harm them, and that the horsehair whip blessed by the priest could turn back upon the marksman the bullet he fired.

The story of Taoist influence on Chinese history has

yet to be written. It has been greater than is generally realized. Emperors have been its devotees. It may have been the cause of the burning of the ancient books by China's Napoleon, Ch'in Shih Huang. For hundreds of years it influenced the Court of China, and affected both politics and the national religion. It has adopted all that it possibly could from Buddhism, except the higher elements, established its heaven, modelled in clay its lurid hell, filled it with all the horrid torments which the barbarous mind can invent, and deified Laocius and a multitude of others, as well as the various forces of Nature.

There are, however, still some purer souls who seek in Taoism those truths which inspired its founders, and the writings of Laocius and Chuang-tzŭ are read by thoughtful men outside the Taoist cult. Indeed, more or less unconsciously, many of those truths find a permanent home in the thoughts of the people, and thus prepare the way for the Greater Tao. For 'In the beginning was the Tao, and the Tao was with God, and the Tao was God. And the Tao became flesh, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' Laocius and Chuang-tzŭ have helped to prepare the Way for Him.

LECTURE IV

BUDDHA AND BUDDHISM

The Buddha, which being interpreted means the One who knows, or the Enlightened, the Sage, was born, as is now generally agreed, in or about the year 543 B.C.

Whilst the teachings of the ancients were chiefly preserved, until a comparatively late period, in the memories of men, there seems little reason to doubt that the development of the art and apparatus for writing played no indifferent part in preparing the way throughout the civilized world for its first great renaissance. During this period, the middle section of the first millennium before the Christian era, China saw the rise of Confucius, Laocius, Mencius, Chuang-tzŭ, and other philosophers; India gave to the world Buddha, her greatest moral and religious leader and reformer; Persia, Zoroaster; Greece, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, and many others; and Judea, Ezra, Isaiah, and all the prophets of Israel.

Of all these the one who has influenced the greatest mass of humanity is the Buddha. Not only has he powerfully affected the untold millions of the Far East, but his power has also been felt in the West, and if there be any foundation for the idea that at least one of the schools of Gnosticism, which word in meaning is the same as Buddhism, was a Western form of Buddha's doctrine, then at one time even Christianity was threatened with his dominance.[1]

[1] *Primitive Christianity*, by Pfleiderer, vol. iii, p. 139.

The life and work of a man wielding such a mighty influence over humanity cannot be fully told in one brief lecture. I can but give you a sketch of his life, his doctrines, their development and spread, the change which was induced by the Mahāyāna importation, and the condition of Buddhism to-day in China. A religion which has transformed savage races, humanized nations already partly cultivated, and given a hope of salvation to millions for the life to come, is well worthy of a careful study on the part of missionaries to the Far East. And this is advisable in order that they may realize what are the forces at work there for righteousness, learn to discriminate the effective elements from the impotent or harmful, and understand how best to sympathize with the sincere searcher after light, who refuses to allow the precious lamp to be ruthlessly blown out which has shed its rays, however dimly, upon his path, and who dislikes to hear it disparaged.

The Buddha, we may take it, then, was born in the sixth century B.C. It will thus be seen that he was contemporary with Confucius and Laocius. His father, Suddhodana, was chieftain of a principality, of which Kapilavastu was the capital, situated in what is now the State of Nepāl. His family name was Sākya, from which the name by which he is so well known is obtained, Sākyamuni, the Sage, or Saint of the Sākyas. His personal name was Siddārtha, and as Siddārtha he spent his early years in his father's Court, receiving such education in religion, letters, and physical exercises as would fit him for the life and duties he was expected to follow, but from which he later withdrew. Another name given to him, possibly his adult name, was Gautama, and by this name he is more commonly known than by that of Siddārtha.

Multitudinous legends surround his conception, birth,

and later life. Amongst the rest, 'that he was not born as ordinary men are; that he had no earthly father; that he descended of his own accord into his mother's womb from his throne in heaven; and that he gave unmistakable signs, immediately after his birth, of his high character and of his future greatness. Earth and heaven at his birth united to pay him homage; the very trees bent of their own accord over his mother, and the angels and archangels were present with their help. His mother was the best and the purest of the daughters of men, his father was of royal lineage, and a prince of wealth and power. It was a pious task to make his abnegation and his condescension greater by the comparison between the splendour of the position he was to abandon, and the poverty in which he afterwards lived; and in countries distant from Kapilavastu the inconsistencies between such glowing accounts and the very names they contain passed unnoticed by credulous hearers.

'After seven days of fasting and seclusion the pure and holy Māyā dreams that she is carried by archangels to heaven, and that there the future Buddha enters her right side in the form of a superb white elephant. On her relating her dream to her husband he calls together sixty-four chief brahmins to interpret it. Their reply is that the child will be a son who will be a chakravarti, a universal monarch; or, if he becomes a recluse, will be a buddha, "who will remove the veils of ignorance and sin" from the world.'[1]

M. Senart has pointed out how close is the resemblance between many of the legends of the Buddha's birth and the sun-myth, 'the white elephant, for instance, like the white horse, being an emblem of the sun, the universal monarch of the sky'.

'At the conception of the Buddha, thirty-two signs take

[1] Rhys-Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 182 (S.P.C.K.).

place; the ten thousand worlds are filled with light, the blind receive their sight, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, the crooked are made straight, the lame walk, the imprisoned are set free, and so on, all nature blooming, and all beings in earth and heaven being filled with joy; while, by a bold figure of speech, even the fires of hell are extinguished, and the tortures of the damned are mitigated. During the ten months of his life in the womb the child is distinctly visible, sitting cross-legged, unsoiled and dignified; and he preaches to the angels who guard him, stretching out his hand to do so without wounding his mother.

'As a dāgaba holding sacred relics cannot be used to guard any less sacred object, so his mother can bear no other child, and on the seventh day after his birth she dies. When the child is born it takes seven steps forward, and exclaims with lion's voice, "I am the chief of the world; this is my last birth," and again the thirty-two signs of joy appear in the earth and heaven.

'An aged saint . . . seeing these signs is guided to Kapilavastu, and the child is brought in to do him reverence; but instead of doing so, its feet were miraculously placed on the matted locks of the ascetic,' who 'prophesies that the child will become a buddha, and weeps that he himself will not live to see the day.'[1]

On the day of his name-choosing, learned brahmins, after examining the marks on his body, again prophesy that he will become either a chakravarti or a buddha. Another account states that the infant was presented in the temple, when 'all the gods of the then Hindoo Pantheon rose up and did obeisance to him'. At seven years of age, on being placed under the tuition of the ablest teachers, they find that he knows more than they can teach him, and retire dumbfounded. As a young man his

[1] Rhys-Davids, p. 184.

physical development becomes such that, excelling all others, he throws a large elephant to a considerable distance, and shoots an arrow so deep into the earth that it lays bare a fountain of water. These stories are an evident invention of a later age, and may be classed with the fictions of his later wonder-working performances, mere marvels, graceless of good, and therefore incompatible with the character of this great and good man.

Dismissing, then, the mythical part of these stories, we may find truth in the more sober statement that his mother, Māyā, who had been brought from the northern mountains, desired that her period of confinement should be in her native, shall we say maternal, home at Devadaha. On the way thither, in the grove of Lumbinī, the toils of the journey hastened the birth of her child. Hundreds of years later, King Asoka, the Constantine of Buddhism, erected a tablet on the spot, which was discovered in December, 1896. Seven days after her travail Māyā paid for the birth of her great son with her own life, and the child was brought up by her sister, who was also one of his father's wives.

In due course he married and had a son, Rāhula. That his great mind was weighed down with the eternal problem of the pains and griefs of existence here and hereafter, and that he pondered over the why and wherefore of existence, we know, and if the story of the experiences which drove him forth to fathom the mystery be not true, it ought to be. It is said that one day, while on a solitary walk, he met a decrepit old man, another day he met with a man writhing in the agonies of disease, on another day he met a corpse, and, still later, by way of contrast, a serene-looking hermit. Burdened with the mystery of misery, 'hearing oft-times the still sad music of humanity,' he determined to search amongst the hermits for the serenity possessed by the one he had just seen, and,

leaving his home, his wife, and his child, he wandered to the mountains.

The story of his departure is a very human one, how, stealing away by night, he first went to the door of his wife's room, hesitant and longing to take his child again to his breast, yet compelled to deny himself this last joy lest he should disturb the mother in her sleep. Even more pathetic is the story of his return, many years later, a shaven ascetic, in far from princely garb, when his faithful wife, who had never ceased to love him, prostrated herself weeping as she laid her hands upon his feet, then, sadly rising, stood aside, sorrowfully recognizing that her husband could be her husband no longer.

It is interesting to note that during this period the ascetic life was common both in India and China, and it has been suggested that there was intellectual as well as mercantile intercourse between the two countries, an intercourse which may possibly account for ideas that we find in Laocius and Chuang-tzŭ, though of this we have no proof.

The methods of the ascetics, with whom he took counsel and associated himself, failed to bring the solution of his difficulty. He practised all the fastings, bodily distresses, and penances by which they brought their bodies and minds into subjection. Indeed, he carried these practices so far beyond the others, that one day he fell in utter exhaustion and lay for dead. On reviving, he partook of food, to the sore distress of his ascetic companions, who had looked for some revelation from him as the result of his extreme asceticism, and who now left him in disappointment.

While recovering, and meditating under a Bo-tree (*Ficus religiosa*), there came to him, as to Luther in a later age, a realization of the folly of asceticism and of external ceremonial; and in addition there came the full conception

—no new idea in India—of the impermanency and unreality of all beings and things, gods and men alike, and that all existence meant suffering. But the conception which made of him the Enlightened One was that there was a remedy, and that this remedy for suffering lay in the extinction of the ego, the self, through love to all beings, men and things alike. From that sacred tree he went forth to preach and to practise his doctrine, and thence it spread all over the Eastern world.

On two occasions we are told that he was tempted by Māra, the devil. The first of these was immediately after he left his home. 'Māra, the spirit of Evil, appears in the sky, and urges Gautama to stop, promising him in seven days a universal kingdom over the four great continents, if he will give up his enterprise. When his words fail to have the desired effect, the tempter consoles himself with the hope that he will still overcome his enemy, saying, "Sooner or later some hurtful or malicious or angry thought must arise in his mind; in that moment I shall be his master." "And from that hour", says the Jātaka chronicler, "he followed him, on the watch for any failing, cleaving to him like a shadow, which follows the object from which it falls."'[1]

The second occasion was when, on giving up his penance, he was deserted by his friends. 'There now ensued a second struggle in Gautama's mind, described in both the Pāli and the Sanskrit accounts with all the wealth of poetic imagery of which the Indian mind is master. The crisis culminated on a day each event of which is surrounded in the Buddhist lives of their revered Teacher with the wildest legends, in which the very thoughts passing through the mind of Gautama appear in gorgeous descriptions as angels of darkness or of light. Unable to express the struggles of his soul in any other way, they represent him as sitting

[1] Rhys-Davids, p. 32.

sublime, calm, and serene during violent attacks made upon him by a visible Tempter and his wicked angels, armed with all kinds of weapons; the greatness of the temptation being shadowed forth by the horrors of the convulsion of the powers of Nature. "When the conflict began between the Saviour of the World and the Prince of Evil a thousand appalling meteors fell; clouds and darkness prevailed. Even this earth, with the oceans and mountains it contains, though it is unconscious, quaked like a conscious being—like a fond bride when forcibly torn from her bridegroom; like the festoons of a vine shaking under the blast of a whirlwind. The ocean rose under the vibration of this earthquake; rivers flowed back towards their sources; peaks of lofty mountains, where countless trees had grown for ages, rolled crumbling to the earth; a fierce storm howled all around; the roar of the concussion became terrific; the very sun enveloped itself in awful darkness, and a host of headless spirits filled the air."

'It may be questioned how far the later Buddhists have been able to realize the spiritual truth hidden under these material images; most of them have doubtless believed in a real material combat, and a real material earthquake. But it is not in India alone that the attempt to compress ideas about the immaterial into words drawn from tangible things has failed, and has produced expressions which have hardened into false and inconsistent creeds.'[1]

We may take it as beyond reasonable doubt that the Buddha spent the remaining years of his long life in consistent self-denial, propagating his doctrines, gathering and teaching disciples, and founding his church, a church which, like Christianity and Mohammedanism, possessed a world-wide horizon, and was committed to a world-wide dissemination.

[1] Rhys-Davids, p. 36.

'He, the son of a king,[1] associated daily with the lowest and the outcast, went about in rags, begging his food from door to door, and proclaiming everywhere, in the face of that powerful caste-spirit of India, that his religion was a religion of mercy for all. As a teacher he displayed great liberality and tolerance, adopting for instance all those deities which were decidedly popular, though he indeed assigned them a signally inferior position in his system, for the holy man, he used to say, is above the gods.'

Later conceptions tell us that, 'not satisfied with spreading his religion on earth, he is also said to have ascended into the heavens, and to have gone down to hell, to preach everywhere the way of salvation'. It must be remembered that the gods themselves were not considered by him as in a stage of finality, but as still subject to the law of metempsychosis. Towards the end of his life, legend continues that, while on a mountain in Ceylon, discoursing to his disciples, he was glorified, or baptized with fire, a sudden flame of light descending upon him, and encircling his head with a halo of light.

As his end drew near, which really occurred in the north-west of Patna, 'heaven and earth began to tremble and loud voices were heard, all living beings groaning together and bewailing his departure. When he was passing through Kashinagara, a poor workman offered him his last meal, and though he had just refused the offerings of the highest and richest, he accepted this offer, to show his humility, as he said, "for the sake of humanity"'. After his death 'his disciples put his remains into a golden coffin, which immediately grew so heavy that no power could move it. But suddenly his long-deceased mother, Māyā, appeared from above, bewailing her son, when the coffin

[1] Eitel, *Three Lectures on Buddhism*. This is an exaggeration, for his father was but a petty chieftain; moreover, he did not go about 'in rags'. It is, however, the idea prevalent in Buddhist countries.

lifted itself up, the lid sprang open, and Shākyamuni appeared with folded hands, saluting his mother. At his cremation his body was found to be "incombustible by ordinary fire, but suddenly a jet of flame burst out of the mystic character inscribed on Buddha's breast and reduced his body to ashes. The latter were eagerly collected and received henceforth almost divine worship, being carried to all Buddhist countries, and for safe keeping deposited in pagodas expressly built for this purpose".' Hence the origin of the many pagodas seen in China, though the original idea has long since been modified.

I need hardly tell you that much of the preceding description is of comparatively late date. I have, however, thought it right you should be made acquainted with these legends, as they form a very manifest part of Buddhist belief in China, and the Far East generally. On the fine marble dagoba in a temple outside Peking, for instance, the temptations of Buddha are clearly depicted. The resemblance that certain incidents bear to those related of our Lord is self-evident, especially the Temptation. Dr. Timothy Richard has shown me copies of painted scrolls obtained from a monastery in Japan, representing the Buddha and three disciples just across a stream, with eight other disciples on this side, suggesting in a remarkable manner the brook Kedron and the agony of our Lord in Gethsemane. Buddhism has always been remarkable for its eclecticism as also for its imitativeness, and it may yet be found that many of its more modern presentations have had their origin in Christianity. I say this while recognizing that Buddhism may also have influenced Christian dogmas and practice.

To sum up in more prosaic form, we may assume that Gautama was of noble birth, born possibly while his mother was travelling to her maternal home; that he was brought up in the luxury of his times; that he married

and had a son; that the problem of life here, as well as heretofore, and the unending series of transmigrations hereafter, oppressed his sensitive soul; that he left his ancestral home secretly, against what he knew was the will of his father, and joined himself to ascetics, who sought the solution of the problem at least of their own existence away from the busy haunts of men; that, dissatisfied with their egoistic existence (as was Confucius about the same time with the recluses of his own land), the error of ascetic self-absorption and the great truth of self-suppression were borne in upon him as the remedy for the ills of existence, a truth which in his hands led not only to the suppression of selfishness, but to the ultimate suppression even of sentient existence; that he set forth to teach this doctrine, and succeeded in effectively impressing it upon a multitude of his fellow countrymen in and near to his native State; that he lived a consistently self-denying life, filled with a sense of the equal rights of men to the privileges of his religion and the consequent injustice of the caste system; that he died in old age, was cremated and buried, his ashes remaining undisturbed until 1898, when they were discovered and removed to Burma; and, finally, that he left an organized community, disciplined and equipped with a few simple doctrines to teach to mankind, as well as doctrines more complex for the more philosophical of his followers.

The next point to which I wish to draw your attention is the very interesting and remarkable manner in which Buddhism grew into a powerful organization and propagated itself, not only in the country of its origin, but far beyond the pale. So mightily was Buddha impressed with the light which had been revealed to him, and so convinced was he of its saving power for humanity, that immediately after his enlightenment he set out to spread his good news to his fellow ascetics, to his family, and thenceforward to

his fellow countrymen at large. Just as our Lord knew that, whilst what He taught would fulfil the law and the prophets in a very real sense, yet also saw clearly that He would be brought into antagonism with all the vested interests, professionalism, and fixed ideas of the people, so Buddha knew that what he taught would bring him into a measure of opposition with the powerful forces of his day. For his religion wrought to the breaking down of the caste system, which, though not so highly developed then as now, was a formidable barrier against the equal rights of man and his essential brotherhood. Nevertheless, having forsaken all things, and having nothing else to lose, save his life, which he counted not dear to himself, he set forth on his mission, with the result that even during his lifetime he obtained a large following, and at his death passed on to his immediate disciples a well-organized samgha, or order, charged with the maintenance and propagation of his doctrines. 'He appointed his successor, handing over to him his alms-bowl and mantle, together with some pithy sayings, embodying the essence and substance of Buddhist doctrine. This one appointed his successor in the same way, and thus we have a series of patriarchs,' who acted for a long period each as 'temporary head of the church of his time, and who transmitted from generation to generation the reputed teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha'.

The tenets of the Buddha are not supposed to have been immediately committed to writing, but it is probable they were so committed within 150 years of his decease. Commentaries were added by different writers, resulting in diversity of explanation, and oecumenical councils were called as time went on, for purposes of re-stating and rectifying the doctrines which were to be considered orthodox. One of the later but most famous of these councils was held in Kashmir under Kanishka, of the Mongol dynasty, who reigned during the first century of

our era. The complete canon is said not to have taken final form until 'between the years 412 and 413 of our present Christian era', namely, that found in the Pāli text of Ceylon. Just as the New Testament was a growth, so was the Buddhist canon, only much more so, and so long a time elapsed between the death of the Buddha and the compilation as it now exists, that fact and fiction became almost hopelessly intermingled.

The stories of the wide travels of Buddha, carrying his message as far as Ceylon, need not be accepted as genuine. Indeed, it is doubtful if he ever went beyond the countries bordering on the Ganges. It was only after the growth of his community that extensive propaganda became possible.

This was greatly assisted by the political conditions which existed after the invasion of India by Alexander the Great, when the adoption of Buddhism by powerful rulers, who succeeded him, greatly aided the propaganda. 'Out of the political anarchy into which the whole conglomeration of Indian kingdoms was thrown (i.e. after the death of Alexander) arose an empire which soon swallowed up all the others. It was founded by an adventurer of low birth called Tchandragupta by the Buddhists, and Sandrakottos by the Greek historians.' His low birth could not be acceptable to the brahmins, with whom, however, he was on friendly terms, as also was his son.

'His grandson, Ashoka (third century B.C.), whose cognomen Piyadasi (or Priyadarsin) has been handed down to the present day by innumerable stone inscriptions scattered all over India, united nearly the whole of India under his sceptre. Embracing the Buddhist faith . . . he strengthened and extended the Buddhist Church with all the means at his command, and became the Constantine of Indian Buddhism.

'Ashoka, formally acknowledged to hold his power and possessions only as a fief from the Church, convoked an

oecumenic council (in 252 B.C.), for the establishing of orthodox teaching, tightened the reins of church discipline by the introduction of quinquennial assemblies to be held in each diocese, erected pagodas, and endowed monasteries with great profusion in all parts of India. But the greatest work Ashoka did was the establishing of a board for foreign missions (Dharma-Mahāmatra), which sent forth to all surrounding countries enthusiastic preachers, who went out in self-chosen poverty, clad in rags, with the alms-bowl in their hands, but supported by the whole weight of Ashoka's political and diplomatic influence. His own son, Mahêndra, went out as a missionary to Ceylon, and the whole island forthwith embraced the faith of Buddha.

'At the same time Cabulistan, Gandhara, Cashmere, and Nepaul were brought under the influence of Buddhism, and thenceforth every caravan of traders that left India for Central Asia was accompanied by Buddhist missionaries.

'In this way it happened that, as early as 250 B.C., a number of eighteen Buddhist emissaries reached China, where they are held in remembrance to the present day, their images occupying a conspicuous place in every larger temple.'[1]

Asoka was a man of lofty moral character, but it cannot be doubted that during this period the popularization of Buddhism greatly changed it from the simplicity of Buddha, through the recognition of the superstitious beliefs and practices which were in vogue amongst the people. All sorts of pious rites, pilgrimages, offerings, mythological notions, and speculations found an easy entrance, and belief in a succession of Buddhas before Sākyamuni added to the already sufficiently confusing number of objects of worship. 'Gautama had consciously and resolutely turned away from speculative thought, except such as was

[1] Eitel, p. 21, but this tradition lacks support.

inseparably connected with the question of salvation; but in the intellectual atmosphere of India vague fantasies unconsciously sprang up which developed into universal history in the grand style. They played with measureless expanse of space and time; they created limitless worlds, to each of which they assigned their tale of fictitious Buddhas. The historical Gautama, Suddhodana's son, is foreshadowed by them in the whole limitless past. This sort of idea was already prevalent in Asoka's day.'[1]

With the death of Asoka his empire speedily fell to pieces. The Graeco-Bactrian States pressed forward into north-western India, producing a blend of Greek and Indian culture which is still noticeable in Buddhist art. King Menander, whose Indian equivalent is Milinda, and who flourished in the second century B.C., was the greatest sovereign of this dynasty, and he became the patron of Buddhism. The Graeco-Bactrian rule soon felt the pressure of the Mongolian hordes which, first in bodies of Scythians, and later in bodies of Yüeh-Chi, forced their way into India, where in the north-west the Indo-Scythian, or Kushan, empire was soon established.

The most noted ruler of this empire was Kanishka, who flourished during the early part of the first century of our era, and became, like Asoka, a powerful patron of Buddhism. It was during his reign that 'a new type of this religion came into existence', and that the division into the two schools of Mahāyānism and Hīnayānism occurred. He called a famous council at Kashmir, at which the new Buddhism became recognized, and 'three great commentaries to the sacred canon were sanctioned' and written in Sanskrit, supporting the Mahāyāna doctrine. For that reason, the Hīnayāna school to the present day refuses to recognize this council.

It is to Ashvagosha, who lived during the reign of

[1] Hackmann's *Buddhism*, p. 48.

Kanishka, that the development of the Mahāyāna school is attributed. The tractate, known as *The Awakening of Faith*, commonly accredited to him, is of a later date. It exists in a Chinese translation, the *Ch'i Hsin Lun*, and is the gospel of Mahāyānism. He also published a *Life of Buddha* of a legendary character. 'Despite the great cleft which from this time forward ran through Buddhism, it is nevertheless in the first centuries of the Christian era that Buddhism grew and flourished in India.' So influential did it become, and so little did it disturb the popular superstitions, that Brahminism sank into comparative insignificance. By the fourth century A. D., Buddhism had grown into 'the main and ruling religion in India for the bulk of the population'.

It was towards the end of this period that the famous Chinese traveller, Fa Hsien, made his important journey from China through India, where he found Buddhism still 'in its strength and pomp'. The account he has left is of no small value to the student as showing the power, yet degeneracy, of the religion which he found, and which he returned further to propagate in his own country. Another noted pilgrim, Hsüan (or Yüan) Tsang, travelled through India in the seventh century, and his account of the 'relic worship, manifold legends, insipid stories of miracles, belief in the power of magical formulae, arts of exorcism, fragments of Indian nature worship', and so on, unconsciously reveal how far Buddhism had degenerated from its founder's ideals, in this respect resembling Christianity in its media val period of decay.

During this century Brahminism, always opposed to Buddhism, vigorously reasserted itself over a decadent priesthood and a debased faith; persecution is said to have followed in the eighth century, slow destruction until the eleventh century, as much from internal decay as external oppression, and total extinction when 'the fanaticism of

the iconoclastic Moslem' swept over the land in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. 'Since that time the religion of the Buddha Gautama no longer exists in its own native land. Only the ruins of the old Buddhism preserve to the countries on the banks of the Ganges and of the Indus, down to the present day, the interest of all those who are concerned with this remarkable religion.'[1]

Having thus briefly sketched the rise and fall of Buddhism in the country of its birth, let us return to consider its introduction into China.

Buddhism was formally introduced into China during the reign of Ming Ti (i. e. Yung P'ing), A.D. 58-76. It is clear, however, that a previous acquaintance with the religion had existed for a considerable period. I have already referred to the eighteen missionaries who reached China in the third century B.C., suffering imprisonment, it is said, at the hands of the emperor. The intercourse which existed, possibly direct, but chiefly through Central Asian tribes, would convey to China knowledge, however imperfect, of the ideas of Buddhism, which were then actively influencing not only Hindus, but also the northern tribes which pressed upon them. Images and other objects of adoration, of which we have no previous record in the religion of the Chinese, are known to have found their way into the country. We are told that it was through a dream, in which he saw a golden image, that the Emperor Ming Ti sent an embassy to India to bring him news of the great teacher who had arisen in the West. The very fact of this embassy being sent shows that the way was open between the two countries.

How often have Chinese Christians wondered if some glint of the Light of the World had shone into the palace of distant China to cause the king to send messengers to the West, and how often have they speculated what might

[1] Hackmann's *Buddhism*, p. 63.

have happened had the messengers pursued their journey still further West. There is, however, no reason to suppose that the dream was anything but the natural sequence of Buddhist expansion.

Eighteen messengers left the Imperial Court at Lo-yang, now Honanfu, in A.D. 65, and returned in 67, bringing with them images of Buddha, Buddhist scriptures, and two Indian monks. In this way was Buddhism installed in China, but for two and a half centuries no Chinese were permitted to become monks, so that during this period all the monks were foreigners. It is also worthy of note that during this period Buddhism made but little progress in China. It was not, indeed, until an order of Chinese clergy was instituted and a church under native control had been formed, that the religion obtained a wide extension. From this the Christian missionary may well take a hint. A foreign controlled and subsidized church cannot expect to take possession of the Chinese Empire. Not until the Christian Church is in the hands of the Chinese themselves can we hope to see it direct the moral and spiritual destiny of the nation. Happily that day is now dawning.

Thus we find that, when Buddhism had been fortified by and come under the control of a body of Chinese clergy, long and arduous pilgrimages were undertaken by Chinese devotees to India. These were made by Fa Hsien, Hsüan Tsang, I Tsin and others, in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries respectively. The result of their pilgrimages is recorded in works they left behind them.

In A.D. 526 'the Patriarch of Indian Buddhism, Boddhidharma, the twenty-eighth in the list of Buddha's successors, left his native land and migrated to China, which thenceforward became the seat of the patriarchate'.

Confucianism was all along opposed to the progress of Buddhism. Its 'unnatural loosening of family and patriotic ties', as well as 'numerous abuses in the monasteries',

aroused the Confucianists to action. During the eighth century Han Wên Kung composed his famous memorial against the divine honours the king was about to pay to 'a bone of Buddha'. And already, in the beginning of the same century, 'an official persecution had broken out', in which 12,000 monks and nuns were compelled to return to the secular state, and Buddhism was prohibited for a long time. Another persecution took place in the middle of the ninth century. Chinese records relate that 4,600 monasteries were then destroyed. All the property of the monastic communities was confiscated. More than 260,000 monks and nuns were compelled to return to the secular life. Again, in the first half of the tenth century there was a period of severe suppression of the religion, 30,000 temples being closed.

None of these, or subsequent suppressions—most of them of a local character—sufficed to extinguish Buddhism, because it satisfied to some extent a spiritual craving for which neither Confucianism nor Taoism made provision, closely though the latter imitated its foreign rival.

I have already mentioned that the Patriarch of Buddhism finally took up his abode in China, and it is also worthy of note that it was China which became the centre from which the religion, chiefly in its Mahāyāna school, was disseminated over eastern, and even over central and north-eastern Asia. In the seventh century it became the accepted creed of Tibet, under the influence of the ruler, Srong Tsan Gampo, who had united the country under his sway. One of his wives was of the royal house of China, the other was Nepalese, and it was under their influence that Buddhism was adopted. In the fifteenth century, when Christianity had already been known in China for centuries through Nestorian and Western agencies, a great reform took place in Tibetan Buddhism, a reform which has made itself felt throughout the East, and

especially throughout Lamaism in Tibet and Mongolia. It was from Tibet that Mongolia, during the thirteenth century, was converted to Buddhism, under the influence of the great Mongol conqueror, Kublai Khan, the patron of Marco Polo. Korea had received its importation directly from China in the fourth century A.D., and Japan from Korea in the sixth and seventh centuries. In all these countries differing forms of the religion exist, in many and varying schools, both of Mahāyānism and Hīnayānism.

It is time, however, that I put before you some of the main tenets of the Buddha, and explain briefly how the Mahāyāna school has modified his teachings, which are now more accurately represented by the Hīnayāna cult, undoubtedly the more orthodox of the two. Needless to say, in neither do we find Buddhism as it was originally taught, but the changes made by Mahāyānism are almost revolutionary in their character.

The Doctrines of Buddha

If there is one word that will act as a master-key to the doctrines of the Buddha, that word seems to be Impermanence. The idea that was borne into the Buddha's mind, and from which all his other teachings seem to have sprung, was that All is transient, fleeting, impermanent. We are in the habit of speaking in similar terms, but the immutable and eternal God is, or until lately has been, excepted from our thoughts in this respect. Not so with the Buddha. While he denied neither Brahma nor any of the other gods, they were all included under the same law of impermanence. The gods may enjoy the delights of the gods for thousands and hundreds of thousands of years, but that state is as impermanent in its quality as is ours. Thus it will be seen that while, theoretically, Buddha was by no means an atheist, his idea of the mutability of the

gods reduces them in the eyes of Christian orthodoxy to something less than gods. Whether Christian orthodoxy is right or not in its definition of the divine immutability, at least we may say that the polytheism of Buddha is atheism according to our idea, for his 'gods' were impermanent and subject to change, even as we are.

This change is indicated by the word Karma. Now Karma does not mean Fate in our sense of the word. It means the sum-total of the deeds done in previous existences, in other words the resultant of the forces brought into action, for there seems to be one permanent fact in Buddhism, and that is the law of cause and effect. All beings, gods, men, and all living things are what they are as the result of deeds done during their previous existences, and they are now duly receiving their deserts. The law 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap' is reversed in Buddhism, for whatsoever gods, men, and things are now reaping is the result of what they have sown in previous existences of which they may be utterly ignorant. The karma always continues and even the gods must expiate the unsatisfied portion of previous wrong-doing by entering into other forms of lower existence. 'Each individual in the long chain of life inherits all, of good or evil, which all its predecessors', that is, in a sense its previous selves, 'have done or been; and takes up the struggle towards enlightenment precisely there, where they have left it.'[1] Or, as Sir Charles Eliot expresses it, Karma is 'the power of deeds done in past existences to condition and even to create future existences'.

This brings us to the Buddha's ideas of the soul, or, to be more correct, of Anātman, or no soul. Buddha was born into that wonderful period of man's philosophical awakening when the riddle of the universe and of existence pressed for solution. Speculation filled the air of India

[1] Rhys Davids, p. 104.

with its conceptions of the divine, of cosmogony, of the soul and metempsychosis, and of salvation. Psychology rather than theology or cosmology was the chief theoretical subject of the Buddha. His long process of asceticism had fostered a spirit of introspection, with the result that he found nothing within himself but a bundle of ever-varying sensations, which led him to propound the doctrine that no such thing as a permanent soul exists, not even a permanent nucleus which on the death of the body migrates into another body. I cannot show you more effectively how the Buddha denies 'that there is any soul—any entity of any kind, which continues to exist, in any manner, after death'—than by quoting what Gautama himself says:

'After showing how the unfounded belief in the eternal existence of God or gods arose, Gautama goes on to discuss the question of the soul; and points out thirty-two beliefs concerning it, which he declares to be wrong. These are, shortly, as follows: "Upon what principle, or on what account, do those mendicants and brahmins hold the doctrine of future existence? They teach that the soul is material, or is immaterial, or is both, or neither; that it is finite, or infinite, or both, or neither; that it will have one, or many modes of consciousness; that its perceptions will be few, or boundless; that it will be in a state of joy, or misery, or of neither (or both). These are the sixteen heresies teaching a *conscious* existence after death. Then there are eight heresies teaching that the soul, material or immaterial, or both, or neither, finite or infinite, or both, or neither, has an *unconscious* existence after death. And, finally, eight others, which teach that the soul, in the same eight ways, exists after death in a state of being, neither conscious nor unconscious." "Mendicants," concludes the sermon, "that which binds the teacher to existence (viz. tanha, thirst) is cut off; but his body still remains. While his body shall remain he will be seen by gods and men,

but after the termination of life, upon the dissolution of the body, neither gods nor men will see him."'[1]

Now, there is nothing in Christianity to prevent a man from thinking that the changes which will have come over him, say a millennium hence, will be such that it will be even more difficult to realize himself as having been the man he now is, as it is at present for him to throw himself back into his days of infancy and associate himself with the child that then was. But he has no difficulty in maintaining that it will be, as it has been, the same individual or person who exists throughout. This the Buddha denies so far as the connexion between pre-existence, present existence, and future existence are concerned, and he takes as his nexus not a permanent nucleus soul, but his mysterious notion of karma, for, though the individual ceases to exist, his deeds live on in another bodily form, into which as consequences they enter. Into what state those deserts will enter entirely depends on their quality. There is a state of temporary happiness, possibly extending to hundreds of thousands of years in a heaven, as there is a similar state of misery in hell, and in addition there is reincarnation into this life, or transmigration into the many forms which life takes upon it in this world. It will thus be seen that Buddha recognizes both heaven and hell, but they, too, are devoid of permanency, and rebirth will sooner or later occur, always involving suffering.

It is this pessimistically exaggerated doctrine of suffering which looms so large in Buddha's system. We find it stated clearly in the Three Characteristics:

'Whether Buddhas arise, O priests, or whether Buddhas do not arise, it remains a fact, and the fixed and necessary constitution of being, that all its constituents are *transitory*. This fact a Buddha discovers and masters, and when he has discovered and mastered it, he announces, teaches,

[1] Davids, p. 98.

publishes, proclaims, discloses, minutely explains, and makes it clear, that all the constituents of being are transitory.

'Whether Buddhas arise, O priests, etc. (as above), it remains a fact, and the fixed and necessary constitution of being, that all its constituents are *misery*. This fact a Buddha discovers, etc., and makes clear, that all the constituents of being are misery.

'Whether Buddhas arise, O priests, etc., it remains a fact, and the fixed and necessary constitution of being, that all its elements are *lacking in an Ego*. This fact a Buddha discovers, etc., and makes clear, that all the elements of being are lacking in an Ego.'[1]

On these three propositions, indeed, we are justified in declaring the Buddhist religion to be founded. Nothing being permanent, all being transitory, there is nothing worth clinging to, therefore all may be left, even as the Buddha left all things. Existence meaning suffering, the bliss to be aimed at is the bliss of non-existence, of perfect rest, of parinirvana. There being no real ego, no real self, let the seeming self be set aside through love to all, both men and things, and, in the perfection of this, nirvana may be attained in this life, and parinirvana in the hereafter. That which binds to existence is the thirst for, the craving after, the clinging to life, to the things of life, to the ego or self. The attainment of nirvana can only be obtained by the extinction of this ego, this self, this craving to exist. There is in this doctrine of self-suppression much that reminds us of the teaching of our Lord, but when we come to look at the motive and the object, there all likeness ends, for they are poles asunder. In the one we have a doctrine of the profoundest pessimism; in the other a doctrine of the sublimest hope conceivable to men in our present dimension.

[1] Warren's *Buddhism in Translations*, p. xiv.

There is one other word on which I must dwell for a few moments before bringing this very imperfect and all too brief description of a complex and profound subject to a close, and that is the word Nirvana. It will scarcely be necessary for me, in these days, to lay emphasis on the established fact that nirvana does not necessarily mean the annihilation of existence. While it does mean annihilation, it does not necessarily mean the extinction of life. The notion underlying it in the Buddhist canon is the extinction of that thirst for, craving after, grasping of, or clinging to, life and to the ego which necessarily result in suffering, and the extinction of which brings rest. In this state of rest, undisturbed alike by passion, by evil, or even by pleasure, lies the highest good for the life that now is. He who attains to it, but who has not yet attained to the perfect enlightenment of Buddhahood, may anticipate continuation as an Arhat in his next metempsychosis, and he who attains to perfect enlightenment may anticipate the perfect nirvana, the parinirvana of the Buddha, when 'neither gods nor men will see him', extinguished like a lamp, and his karma no longer capable of individualization.

Two features of importance I must refer to. One of these is the lofty moral teaching of the Buddha. The other is that while Buddhahood and Arhatship could best be obtained by joining his order of mendicant monks and nuns—for Buddha, after much hesitation and fully recognizing the attendant dangers, established an order of nuns—provision was made for lay adherents, who were unable fully to join his order. It must be borne in mind that he held salvation to be independent of time, state, or place. Hence, although it was much more difficult for a man immersed in the business of this life to attain to the ultimate nirvana, it was by no means impossible. And even if so high an attainment proved impossible to the laity, yet, by living lives of self-suppression and love to all beings,

their karma would result in a reincarnation in higher form, and in this they might even have the lofty privilege of becoming mendicant monks or nuns and ultimately attaining to the bliss of Buddhahood. 'The kingdom of heaven is within you,' said our Lord; and in somewhat similar fashion the Buddha taught that salvation lay within the man himself, independent of forms and ceremonies, independent even of fastings or abstinence from any class of food, though he advocated temperance in food and insisted upon abstinence from wine.

As to his moral code there were five commandments laid down by Buddha for all his followers:

Not to destroy life.
Not to steal.
Not to commit adultery.
Not to tell lies.
Not to drink intoxicants.

Three commands *permissive* to laymen, but *binding* on clerics, were added:

Not to eat unauthorized food at nights.
Not to wear garlands or use perfumes.
To sleep on a mat spread on the ground.

On clerics two others were also binding:

To abstain from dancing, singing, music, and stage plays.
Not to receive gold or silver.

These are the ten commandments of the Buddhist Order.

When the present-day monk takes his vows he repeats three times the ten commandments, in substance the same, in form somewhat different from the above, and also the following well-known formula:

I go for refuge to the Buddha.
I go for refuge to the Law (Dharma).
I go for refuge to the Order (Sangha).

Needless to say, the Buddhist canon treats in minute fashion on the philosophical questions raised by Buddha's doctrines, and also on the moral and conventional duties both of laymen and clerics. The duties of parents to children and children to parents, of pupils and teachers, of husband and wife, of friends and companions, of masters and servants, of laymen to clerics and clerics to laymen, are all admirably set forth. Sacrifice, prayer, adoration are, of course, absent from original Buddhism. Their place is taken by meditation, a meditation in its advanced form leading to a condition of trance. Rules are laid down, and subjects delineated for these meditations, and in the mystic trance six kinds of transcendental wisdom and ten transcendental powers were believed to be acquired. In this trancelike condition the subject passes from joy to ecstasy, and from ecstasy to perfect tranquillity. But 'the most ancient Buddhism despises dreams and visions', and holds that this mystic trance is 'of small practical importance compared with the doctrine of the Noble Eightfold Path, namely:

1. Right Belief.
2. Right Aims.
3. Right Speech.
4. Right Actions.
5. Right Means of Livelihood.
6. Right Endeavour.
7. Right Mindfulness.
8. Right Meditation.'

One of the most remarkable characteristics of the Buddha is his Catholicism. His religion is for all. Neither caste nor colour may be a barrier in his community. His salvation is for all, men, women, and all creatures. It was the first universalist religion.

Despite the beauty and purity of the Buddha's life and teaching, the absence of a Divine Helper and the human distaste for extinction ultimately brought revolutionary changes into the cult which bore his name. Whence these

changes came is still a subject for research. That ideas originating in the Christian Church have influenced the Buddhist community I think probable, but whether Christianity or Messianism had anything to do with the creation of the Mahāyāna school is another question. The creation of this powerful school, which has dominated northern and eastern Buddhism, is generally ascribed to Ashvagosha, during the reign of Kanishka, who began his reign in or about A.D. 10. Whatever the origin, the ideas introduced were of so important a character that the new cult received the name of Mahāyāna, the Great Vehicle, as contrasted with Hīnayāna, the Small Vehicle, signifying the relative narrowness of the latter both in regard to doctrine and saving power. Both schools flourished in India, and Hīnayānism is still found in China, though Mahāyānism is there the prevailing cult.

The distinguished doctrines of the Mahāyāna cult are the following:

1. *The Conception of a Supreme and Eternal Being.*— While the early supporters of the Mahāyāna school profess to found their belief in an inscrutable Supreme Being, in whom all things exist and from whom they proceed, upon a recondite saying of Buddha, the rejection of this view by the orthodox, or Hīnayāna, school strengthens the view of the impartial scholar that the introduction of this doctrine is of a revolutionary character. The idea of the Mahāyānist is that this Absolute Being has manifested Himself in multitudinous ways, especially through the Buddhas, of whom Gautama was one. The corollary of this doctrine is that the Mahāyānist need find no difficulty in recognizing the great Sages of the world as Buddhas also, and therefore Jesus Christ as such. The Trinity (Triratna) of the Mahāyāna school is defined in various ways and differs from the general Buddhist Trikāya. The subject is too complicated for discussion here. For

general purposes the Trinity may be summarized as Buddha, the Dharma (Law), and the Sangha (Church, or body of monks).

2. *The Bodhisattvas.*—While Buddha himself is a common object of worship, in a manner glaringly opposed to his own teaching, Bodhisattvas are much more frequently appealed to, and this for the simple reason that, like the Buddha before his incarnation, they have denied themselves the privilege of entering into the final stage of nirvana, in order to devote themselves to the saving of humanity. They are perfectly fitted to enter upon the final stage of Buddhahood, but their love for living beings is such that they are willing to forgo for countless ages the perfect state, in order to minister to the needs and save from woe the suffering world, and are ever ready to respond to the cries of the distressed. Two of the most popular of these Bodhisattvas, both possibly of Persian origin, are Amitābha, of 'infinite light' and 'infinite life', and Kuan-Yin the 'Goddess of Mercy', and the invocation of these is never-ceasing. With these two doctrines of an All-conserving Soul of the Universe manifesting Himself in human form, and a host of Saviours of the world, it is easy to see how Buddhism is able to recognize the deities of the lands into which it has entered as manifestations of the Supreme and saviours of the race. Indeed, every man is a potential Bodhisattva and may become such in this life.

3. *Salvation by Faith.*—In place of the essentially orthodox Buddhist doctrine of Salvation by Works, the Bodhisattva doctrine introduces us to the revolutionary doctrine of Salvation by Faith. Reference has already been made to the fundamental tractate of this school, *The Awakening of Faith* (p. 92). The Hīnayāna doctrine of long processes of struggle and reincarnation before Buddhahood and Parinīrvāna can be attained is here countered by the doctrine of immediate Salvation through faith. No longer

need man or woman go through age-long torments. Here is hope, here is a way of immediate escape, not by the works of the flesh, not by the works of the Dharma or Law, for 'to him that worketh not, but believeth (or calleth) on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness'. 'Only believe and thou shalt be saved' has its counterpart in only call on one of the Bodhisattvas and thou shalt be saved. There is, of course, no more encouragement in Mahāyānism than in Christianity for faith as a mere cloak for immorality, for true faith produces true works.

4. *The Soul restored.*—Generally speaking, Mahāyānism ignores or puts aside the doctrine of Anātman. There are of course different views in its differing schools, but the Chinese mind has never taken kindly to the doctrine of the non-ego. It has always clung to the idea of personality as a treasured possession conferred by the parents. Buddhism to-day has ceased the attempt to deprive the Chinese devotee of his personality. He is allowed the possession of a soul, to all intents immortal, even though some schools may esoterically count the idea as Māya, or illusion.

5. *Heaven and Hell.*—The natural outcome of a religion of Salvation is that you are to be saved from and to somewhere. So Mahāyānism, whilst it has emphasized the Buddhist hells, and exhibits them in every city in China in all possible and impossible forms of torture that a fiendish genius can conceive, yet offers also a Western Paradise, the abode of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. It is the home of the soul, the abode of bliss, of eternal light and liberty and joy. True, there are those who limit this bliss to millions of years with subsequent Karmaic reincarnations, but that background is not visible to the faithful. Nirvana in its ultimate meaning is philosophically recognized, but in practice the paradise of the Bodhisattvas is now the

final goal of the devout Buddhist of this school. Hell and transmigration are of course the other stages of continued existence.

6. *Prayer and Invocation.*—The natural consequence of the recognition of divine beings, sympathetic with the woes of humanity, and yearning to help, is that prayer, or at least invocation, an idea foreign to early Buddhism, is everywhere made. This is very much in evidence in those parts of northern China where Lamaism prevails, in the shape of praying-wheels, a grotesque form of Buddha's loftier conception of the Wheel of the Law rolling forward like the sun and enlightening the world. But throughout China temples are found well supplied with devas, bodhisattvas, and arhats, sometimes hundreds of them in a temple, to whom incense is lighted and invocation made.

7. *The Clerical Order.*—Just as it was in the Christian Church, when the apostleship degenerated into a professionally clerical, or priestly class, so has it been with the simple mendicant order founded by Buddha. A debased and ignorant body of monks and nuns only roll along the Wheel of the Law by twirling their beads as they drone their wearisome invocations, and only keep aglow the effulgence of the Enlightened One by keeping the lamp before his shrine ever lighted. Souls of the living are now saved, more assuredly by invocation and ceremonial than by meditation and self-suppression, and souls of the departed can only be released from the agonies of hell by the remunerated power of the priest. Such a condition is not unknown in degenerate Christianity. There are of course good and sincere, and surely there must occasionally be even learned men amongst them, but the mass are illiterate, sometimes immoral, and almost restful enough to need no further nirvana. Sir Charles Eliot says of Buddhism that 'its pessimistic doctrines and monastic

institutions are, if judged by ordinary standards, bad for the welfare of a nation; second, that more than any other religion it is liable to become corrupt'—a view which few will contradict.

We may say, then, that original Buddhism is founded upon the permanent impermanency of all things, an exaggerated estimate of suffering, and the extinction of self as the only way of escape. Neo-Buddhism, or Mahāyānism, recognizes a Being who transcends the impermanent, and its objective is salvation to a permanent heaven through faith in, and invocation of, saviours. As a religion Buddhism has profoundly influenced both life and thought throughout the Far East. I hold that in its Mahāyāna form it is not an enemy to the Christian missionary, but a friend, for it has familiarized the Chinese mind with ideas essential to the right appreciation of Christianity, and Christianity is a religion which carries with it a higher and a saner potentiality, whether of faith or practice, than exists outside it, for the realization of the best ideals of the best thinkers the East has given to the world.

What has Christianity to offer that Buddhism does not supply?

1. First of all we can offer our admittedly difficult, but fundamental, doctrine of the Fatherhood of God. Reason and experience convince us that it is a doctrine which, on the lowest reckoning, produces results far surpassing the belief in a host of dying devas, an eternal impersonal law, or imaginary Boddhisattvas. We find sufficient experimental conviction for a belief in 'God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible', whose Dharma is for good and not for ill, in knowledge of and obedience to which lie man's true emancipation and hope.

2. In place of imaginary Boddhisattvas we can offer an

historical Saviour who reveals the way of salvation through Sonship.

3. In place of the Triratna, Buddha, Dharma, the Clergy, or the Trikāya, we can offer God Himself in three manifestations, as Father, in the Son, and through His Divine Spirit of Holiness.

4. In place of salvation by faith through an incessant 'prayer-wheel' type of invocation of sacred names, we can offer salvation by faith in the Son of God and the communion of His spirit and life.

5. In place of a non-ego, or the extinction of the self, we can offer the full development of a real self which devotes all the qualities of its personality for the welfare of the race.

6. In place of a horrifying hell and a banal heaven, we can offer, along with divine law and justice, our sure and certain hope of development in higher dimensions, higher attainments and proportionate happiness, and of meeting those whom we honour and love *in person*.

7. In place of the incorrect premiss that all existence is suffering, we can show that most of life for all God's creatures is free from pain, and that the revelation of divine sonship is actually removing not only actual pain but its cause. To this we call our hospitals and hygiene to testify, as well as the lives of men and women changed for service.

8. In place of Karma we can offer the resultant, the character of the New Birth in Christ Jesus, with its progressively higher regenerative powers.

9. While recognizing that all is transitory and impermanent, we do not find it cause for pessimism. All *life* must move and change, and need not change for the worse.

10. In place of invocation we can offer prayer and holy communion; prayer, not as one Buddhist writer puts it, in

order to appease God and get Him to change His laws, but communion that we may learn, love, and obey His laws.

11. In place of a monkhood, withdrawn from the world, as the highest hope of salvation, a monkhood which in practice empties the mind, and makes for sloth and dullness, we can offer the 'royal priesthood', which works for universal health, and mental, moral, and spiritual efficiency.

12. Finally, we can offer them the Holy Catholic Church as the Family of God on earth, in which they may cultivate every family virtue, and in which they may help to accomplish His will for all men. In this they will find emancipation from their animistic bonds and the demon-fear universal in all Buddhist lands.[1]

I cannot close this lecture better than by quoting from an article recently published by a non-Christian Chinese writer:

'Christianity', he says, 'teaches the littleness of death by its stress on a higher life. For instance, it shows that suffering, loss, trials, and poverty are most excellent discipline for a higher life, and therefore is calm and confident in distress by the feeling of dependence on a higher Power. Not only so, but it looks upon all trials as a noble test of faith sent by a loving God. Therefore, a true Christian is strong in suffering. His desire at all times is to cultivate the spiritual side of his nature. Buddhism is not so. The Buddhist aims to sever himself from the world. He views distresses as hardships. He wants, therefore, to get rid of the body and become spirit. Thus you see there is a great difference between this and the Christian's point of view, which regards suffering as a stepping-stone to higher things. Christianity, too, aims at

[1] From the *Modern Churchman*, September 1922.

renovating the world and making all men good, and in this way change even this material world into a heaven. God, too, has revealed this definite purpose. We see that thus Buddhism, by scurrying from the world, is diametrically opposed to Christianity. Being then opposed to God's will, how can a Buddhist hope thus to attain to a higher heaven, running contrary to God's will here? Buddhism abandons the world. Christianity would redeem it. A great contrast!'[1]

[1] Translated by the Rev. Evan Morgan in *Chinese Recorder*, July 1912.

LECTURE V

THE IDEA OF GOD

THEORIES of various kinds have been advanced as to the origin of the idea of God. It has been placed to the credit of the departed ancestor, as an outgrowth of that primaeval respect and provision for the dead, which, not limited to China, has been found amongst all classes of primitive men. With no desire to controvert the idea, I fail to find sufficient evidence to support it in the records of China, the country where ancestor-worship is universal. The idea has also been accredited to dreams, the ghost theory, in which the departed have reappeared to the living in all the vivid reality of a savage's dream. No trace of this to justify any such conclusion is to be found in the ancient records, though dreams play no unimportant part in Chinese life.

Dr. de Groot, in his lectures at the Hartford School of Missions, definitely declares that 'the primaeval form of the religion of the Chinese, and its very core to this day, is animism . . . the same element which is also found to be the root, the central nerve, of many primaeval religions, the same even which eminent thinkers of our time, as Herbert Spencer, have put in the foreground of their systems as the beginning of all human religion of whatever kind. In China it is based on an implicit belief in the animation of the universe, and of every being or thing which exists in it.'

On the other hand, the Rev. Dr. Ross, using the language of Dr. Legge, no less dogmatically declares, in

his recent book, that the original religion of the Chinese was 'monotheistic, though not henotheistic'—that is, that they 'believed in and worshipped a plurality of inferior deities of various grades subordinate to the Supreme God'.

He says further:

'The endeavour to trace the original religion of China to the worship of ancestors or a belief in ghosts, is to rely on a theory which is without a particle of foundation, and in direct contrariety to all known facts. For we are ushered at one step into the presence of a religion in which there is One God supreme over all in heaven and earth, all other spirits being subordinate to Him.'

And further:

'The name bursts suddenly upon us from the first page of history without a note of warning. At this point, the very threshold of what the Chinese critics accept as the beginning of their authentic history, the name of God and other religious matters present themselves with the completeness of a Minerva. We are driven to infer that the name, as in the case of Israel at a later age, and the religious observances associated with it, are coeval with the existence of the people of China.'

Here, then, we have four theories in regard to the origin of the idea of God—the ancestral, the dream or ghost, the animistic, and the innate monotheistic theories. In regard to China we may now reduce these to two opposite schools of thought, the older one, of which Dr. Ross is the most recent exponent, and the modern one, of which Dr. de Groot is the protagonist. On the one hand, Dr. Ross definitely asserts that monotheism was 'the original religion of the Chinese', and on the other, Dr. de Groot unequivocably declares that 'the primaeval form of the religion of the Chinese, and its very core to this day, is animistic'.

The same discussion still continues in regard to our own

religion, indeed of religion in general, and you are sufficiently familiar with the arguments advanced on both sides. What then are we to say about the origin of theistic ideas in China? Dr. Ross assumes that because we find in the oldest records a belief in a Supreme Ruler, this belief must have been innate in, or co-existent with, the Chinese race. But to hold that the beliefs of a people as seen expressed after they have made the tremendous step forward of founding a system of writing, and manifestly made great advances in civilization, are identical with the beliefs they held while in an undeveloped condition,—surely, this postulates more than our knowledge, or the probabilities of the case, can justify.

Is it not much more reasonable to agree with Dr. de Groot in at least part of his statement, that religion in China has developed from a primitive animism? And may we not go on to say that the Chinese were led, before the period of recorded history, to the marvellous discovery of the unity of Nature, the heavens and the earth as a universe, and to the recognition of one Supreme God of gods? Whether this knowledge was bestowed by a special revelation, or was the logical outcome of a process of reasoning, either consequent upon the observance of natural law, or the development of society with its chieftain, or sovereign, we need not stay to discuss. At least Christian men in both schools will agree in what is, after all, the main point—that the Divine Magnet has been drawing the human spirit everywhere out of the dross of the material and transient upwards towards Himself, the Spiritual and Eternal.

As to the theory held by Dr. de Groot, whose views were advanced in China forty years ago by the Rev. Canon MacClatchie and severely combated, a theory upon which Dr. de Groot has founded his book, far be it from me to deny an original animistic basis to the native religion of

China. For if the modern theory be correct, that all religion took its rise in a primitive animism, then logically whatever religion there may be in China must also have arisen by a like process. Nor do I wish to deny that a kind of animism is its 'very core to this day'. After all, much depends on the definition of the term. If it be defined as in the Oxford Dictionary, 'the attribution of a living soul to inanimate objects and natural phenomena', and if by this be meant the possession by what we call a material object—a stone, a block—of a soul, linked together as soul and body are considered to be linked and localized in the human being, then I am of opinion that such a notion is absent from present-day development in China. Whether there is evidence of its existence in historic times is a question of interpretation. But if by animism be meant that that which both we and the Chinese call a material object may become the lodging-place of a spirit, free to come and go, and that all natural phenomena are caused by spiritual beings, not necessarily immanent in, or part of, the phenomena, then I see no difficulty in agreeing with him. The attitude of the modern Chinese mind in relation to idols and tablets differs little, so far as I have been able to fathom it, from the attitude of many of the Roman, or Greek Catholics, towards their images or ikons.

What does seem to me important, however, is not to allow one's mind to be biased by a name—even though it be the name 'animism'—but to find how high the Chinese have risen from what may have been a low animistic condition originally. And, while recognizing as clearly as does Dr. de Groot the low and superstitious condition of religion in China, I do see in the mind of the great thinkers of that country a magnificent rise above mere animism into realms that are spiritual.

What, then, are the theistic conceptions of the Chinese? Briefly stated, what we know is, that the national religion

recognizes a Supreme Being, impersonally denoted by T'ien, or Heaven; personally denoted by Shang Ti, or the Ruler above, the Over Ruler, or, in other words, the Supreme Sovereign. In the invisible world He is aided by a multitude of spirits, or divine beings; in the visible world by sages and rulers, of whom the chief was the Emperor of China, who, as pontifex maximus and vicar of God, has heretofore had sole right to sacrifice to Him as Shang Ti, though as impersonal Heaven, and even as Shang Ti, all men may approach Him.

How these conceptions arose is beyond our knowledge to assert. Surmise we may, but of proof there is none in China, any more than there is in the West. Whether we shall ever be in a position to prove what were the origins of religion anywhere in the world, who shall declare? At least we may say that China presents a great field for research. Fifteen hundred years ago the 'Bamboo Books' were recovered from the disturbed grave of an ancient king. There are graves, believed to be still intact, which date back five thousand years, those of the pre-dynastic Yao and Shun, for instance, in Shansi. Dr. Stein has recently exhumed, from a sand-buried garrison on the north-west frontier, tablets of wood, in excellent preservation, which were indited in the middle of the first century B.C., and has thus exhibited for our inspection writings the like of which no living Chinese had ever before gazed upon. A collection of the shoulder-blades of sheep, inscribed with ancient characters, probably written in the second millennium before Christ, has recently been acquired by the British Museum. What else there may be in store when the Chinese outgrow their superstitions and undertake scientific archaeological research it is impossible to say.

It does not follow, however, that even what may be unearthed in China will tell us what was the original religion of the race, for the original home of the Chinese

is still matter of dispute. Whether they are an indigenous race, or whether they migrated, as some have asserted, from central or western Asia, struck the banks of the Yellow River, settled along its valley in Shansi, Shensi, and Honan, where we find them at the dawn of history, driving a wedge into the numerous aboriginal tribes which we know existed—this is a question still undetermined. If they are not indigenous, but immigrants, then their early notions must be sought elsewhere. Whatever their original habitat, and over whatsoever road they may have travelled, there their history has been written, and might still be evident to us had we a more highly developed vision. As humanity does not yet possess such vision, we are compelled to limit our research to the beliefs and practices of the people, on the one hand as they are exhibited at the present day, complicated by the admixture of Buddhist and other foreign elements, and, on the other, as they are exhibited nearer to the source, though still far from it, in the ancient books of the country.

It is to the latter, the Sacred Books, that I wish to make special appeal, for they are the earliest record we possess of the religion and civilization of the nation. They may not tell us what the original religion was, any more than the ancient writings of any other people do, for the origin of belief is still hidden from our eyes through our inability to pierce the gloom of the long ages before man learned to form into pictures his simple thoughts. We know, however, from the earliest records of China, that they were a religious people. The God-given instinct and intellect of man have everywhere, and not least in China, demanded satisfaction in an invisible Power outside himself in whatever form conceived, or by whatever name denominated, but always a Power that makes for righteousness. The awakening intellect, amidst the wonder and the awe of the masterful forces of Nature, compelled him in very early

times to think in terms of the immaterial. Nor has increasing wisdom and sincere research into the divine laws dulled this sense of wonder and awe, either in China or here, of old or now. The wonder is no less despite all our knowledge; the awe knows no decrease. We may thank God for both, for the wonder which still keeps us children, for the awe which is not terror. Fear repels; awe attracts.

It may be well, at this point, to indicate what are the authentic sources of our information as to the ancient notions held by the Chinese, many of which are still at the foundation of the national religion. The pre-Confucian ideas are to be found in the Five Canonical or Sacred Books, all edited by Confucius. The other sources of our information as to the ideas of Confucius and his immediate followers are found in the 'Four Books'. These Five Canons and Four Books I have already briefly referred to in my first lecture. In addition, we have the writers of the Taoist school, the Tao Tê Ching, the Nan Hua Ching of Chuang-tzŭ, and others. We have also the History of Ssŭ-ma Ch'ien, the Herodotus of China, and many other treatises and histories. As to the Five Canonical Classics, first of all is—

The Shu Ching, or The Record, commonly known as the Book, or the Book of History. This is the earliest historical work in our possession. In fact, it can hardly be called a history, as it consists rather of speeches attributed to various early emperors, or dialogues between them and their ministers. Its range is between 2200 and 600 B.C.

The Odes contains ballads and religious songs, some probably composed 2000 years B.C. Many of them reveal a state of primitive simplicity, before the conventionalities of civilization had artificialized social life and brought about the seclusion of woman.

in sacrifice to the 'Cultivated ancestor' (or 'ancestors'), possibly his predecessors in the kingly office, rather than his own progenitors.

It is not until we reach the end of the Canon of Shun that we actually meet with the word T'ien, and even then its interpretation need not necessarily imply divinity. The first occasion on which we find it definitely associated with the idea of divinity is in the Counsels of the Great Yü, successor to Shun, and founder of the first dynasty. The words are uttered by Shun when calling upon Yü to succeed him. He says: 'The lot of Heaven has fallen upon your person, and you must eventually ascend to the sovereignty.' Later he adds: 'If the country suffer distress and poverty, the rewards (or grants) of Heaven (your divine blessings) will for ever end.' Here, then, is the first recorded instance of the use of T'ien, evidently no new term, but one of ancient origin.

While Shun was yet alive he commissioned his chief minister and successor Yü to bring the prince of the indigenous Miao tribes to submission. In the course of Yü's address to his men, after reproaching the Miao prince with his insolent behaviour, and declaring him to be a rebel to the right and a destroyer of virtue, who exiles the good and promotes the unworthy, he goes on to say that 'Heaven is sending down doom upon him', and bids his men with united heart and strength go forward. The prince of the Miao proved too strong for Yü, whereupon Yü's chief minister advised him thus: 'It is virtue which moves Heaven; there is no distance to which it does not reach. Pride brings loss, humility receives increase—this is the way of Heaven. In the early years of our emperor (i. e. Shun) when he lived on Mount Li, he went into the fields and daily cried with tears to compassionate Heaven and to his (unkind) parents, taking upon himself all guilt and wrong-doing. . . . Perfect

sincerity moves the spirits (Shên, 神), how much more this prince of Miao.' Yü accepted the advice, withdrew his men, caused them to perform dances, probably religious, in the court or temple, and in seventy days the prince of Miao, influenced thereby, was led to tender his submission.

Now in the above excerpts we find three important terms taken from the oldest part of the most ancient book in China, each of which has been claimed as the right term for God. The first in order is Shang Ti, the second is T'ien, and the third is Shên. As to Shang Ti, He is definitely a personal God, verily the King of kings, inasmuch as throughout Chinese history none but kings have offered sacrifice to Him, for the offering of sacrifice by any one else is equivalent to rebellion, the sacrificer by such act asserting his claim to the imperial office of pontifex maximus, and therefore to the throne.

In the second place we have the term T'ien, the impersonal Heaven, whom all may worship, and whose ear is open to the cry of all, from the king on his throne to the humblest in the land. The people of the south still hold to the impersonal term T'ien, but the people of the north have personified Him under the title Lao T'ien Yeh, which may be interpreted either as His Honour Heaven, or The Honoured Progenitor Heaven.

What the earliest form of the character for Heaven may have been, we do not know. Dr. Giles has shown that in certain ancient forms it was written in the shape of a man, and I may add that the Chinese have the common saying, 'Heaven is man (writ) large; man is heaven (writ) small'. Dr. Giles points out that 'there does not seem to have been any attempt to draw a picture of the sky. On the other hand, the character T'ien is just such a representation of a human being as would be expected from the hand of a prehistoric artist ; and under this un-

mistakable shape the character appears on bells and tripods, as seen in collections of inscriptions, so late as the sixth and seventh centuries B.C., after which the head is flattened to a line, and the arms raised until they form another line parallel to the head 天'.[1]

The character T'ien also means the sky, a day, and the weather; and in his address at the Third International Congress for the History of Religions, Dr. Giles wisely adds, 'It is not suggested that the idea of an anthropomorphic God preceded the idea of the sky in which He was placed; but merely that in the Chinese script the character for T'ien emphasizes pictorially the sense of God rather than that of sky, the latter being nevertheless the original meaning of the spoken word T'ien, and still the more common meaning of the two . . . . An earlier symbol for the visible heavens, belonging to the days of pictorial writing, but now no longer in use, is said to have been three horizontal lines 三.'[2]

This view of the character has led Dr. Giles, wherever it occurs as representing Heaven, to translate it by the term God. Were one able to accept this view it would bring the Chinese into line with most of the other Asiatic and European peoples, to whom the word for the sky, or heaven, became the word used for deity, e.g. dyaus, dewa, deus, theos, divine. It would give me great pleasure to follow Dr. Giles in this view did I think it sufficiently established, for it is reasonable to suppose that the awakening intelligence of primaeval man, drawn by the Divine Spirit away from the perishing dust of his mortal surroundings, should have turned wondering eyes to the marvel of the sky, away from the familiar things with which he had previously satisfied his merely physical needs. The

[1] Giles's *Religions of Ancient China* (Constable, 1s.).

[2] *Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions*, p. 106.

dawn of wonder is the dawn of religion, and the greatest of wonders is the sky. While not denying that there may be such, I am unacquainted with any Chinese writer who has ever interpreted the *character* T'ien as does Dr. Giles. Parenthetically I may remark that, under the old régime, a schoolboy's first writing lesson consisted of the three words 一 大 人, 'a great man', into which three characters 天 may be divided. For the time being, however, it seems to me safer to translate T'ien in the sense of an impersonal Heaven rather than in the sense of a personal God.

The 'term question' is a very old one, and has produced much disputation. When the Emperor K'ang Hsi, in the seventeenth century A.D., would have settled the dispute between his friends the Jesuits on the one hand, and the Franciscans and Dominicans on the other, by the adoption of the word T'ien for God, the impersonality of the term was strenuously objected to by the Franciscans and Dominicans. The Pope, to whom an appeal was made, supported their view, with the result that a personal 'T'ien Chu', or 'Lord of Heaven', has been the Roman designation ever since. This claim of the Pope to override the decision of the Emperor was one of the causes which, by Jesuit writers, is said to have prevented the conversion of the Emperor, and through him of all China.

Still another term remains to which I will briefly draw your attention. It occurs in the passage I have quoted above, namely, the word Shên. At one time the conflict between the terms Shang Ti and Shên was keen amongst the Protestant missionaries. Even yet Bibles are printed, some with Shang Ti for God, and some with Shên. Now, it is sufficiently clear from the earliest extract in which Shên is used in the Book of History, that it there refers, not to one God but to many, indeed it never refers to a god in the singular without a qualifying word. After sacrificing to Shang Ti, to the six honoured ones, and to

the hills and streams, Shun sacrificed to the host (literally, herd) of Shên. The character for Shên consists of two parts, one the radical, which indicates the meaning, representing 'a divine indication'; the other of phonetic value, also meaning 'to extend'. In general, Shên may be taken to connote our word spirit, referring especially to spirits worthy of honour, as compared with the kwei (originally daimon, now demon). It is important, however, to note that Shên has become a popular name for a number of gods or spirits, especially nature gods, such as the god of wind, fire, &c. It is used also as a generic term for the whole host of divine beings.

Limiting ourselves, then, for the present to the two terms, Shang Ti, the personal God, and T'ien, or the impersonal Heaven, what do we find the ancient books to postulate as to the character of these two? For purposes of comparison I have made a list of all the places where these terms are used in the History, and also compared the meanings in the Odes, and the following is what I find.

The first thing that impresses itself upon the mind is that T'ien is of much more frequent occurrence than is Shang Ti. A closer examination proves that the qualities which are attributed to Shang Ti are all equally attributed to T'ien, and that, in addition, qualities are attributed to T'ien which are not associated with Shang Ti. It would seem as if Shang Ti were conceived of more as a sovereign ruling the world than in a paternal relationship to humanity, and as if Heaven were looked up to not only as a sovereign, though it is also styled Sovereign Heaven, but in a more intimate relationship with men.

This view finds confirmation in the attitude of the Chinese at the present day, for while men worship, call upon, and cry and weep to Heaven, the very sovereignty of Shang Ti, the God, or Jehovah, of the Classics has

seemed to bar the approach of the common people, leaving that approach to his vice-regent, the ruler on earth.

We find in the History and the Odes that to God, whether considered as the personal Shang Ti, or the impersonal T'ien, the following qualities are attributed:

He hears and sees; He enjoys offerings; He has a heart, or mind; He is aided by men, and deputes His work, especially to kings and their ministers; He can be honoured and served; He is awe-inspiring, of dread majesty, and to be feared; He confers on men their moral sense, and makes retention of his favour dependent on moral character; His will is glorious, may be known, and must be complied with; a virtuous king is after His own heart, but He will have no regard to the ill-doer; with such a one He is angry; the virtuous king He will reward with ease and dignity; the appointment to kingly office is in His hands, such appointment is contingent, and He cannot be relied upon not to reverse it, for His favour may be lost; He protects, but may withdraw His protection; He warns, corrects, and punishes the evil king, even afflicts, ruins, and destroys him, and of this instances are clearly given.

Such are the principal qualities attributed equally to Shang Ti and to T'ien. In addition, other qualities are ascribed both by the History and the Odes to T'ien. T'ien gives birth to the people; It gives valour and wisdom to princes; It gives blessings to the good and woes to the evil; It ordains the social order, the religious and social ceremonies, and human virtues; It sends down rain; It is gracious to men and helps them; Its will is unerring; It does not shorten men's lives, they do that themselves; It is not bound to individuals by ties of biased human affections; It commands men to rectify their character; It gives man his nature, compassionates him, and grants his desires; It is only moved by virtue, but men may cry and weep and pray to It, for It will hear.

In addition to many of the above, the Odes ascribe to Shang Ti, that He is great; that He appoints grain for nourishment; that He gives comfort, but also hates; that He smells a sweet savour; that He spoke to King Wên; that He is an example or pattern; and, in a doubtful passage, that He left a toe-print on the earth. In reference to T'ien the Odes also speak of a visitant from Heaven; call T'ien unpitying and unjust; say that It can be offended; call It our parent; invoke It; say that King Wên is in Heaven; describe It as enlightening the people; as intelligent, and clear-seeing; as giving blessings and prosperity; and speak of God (Ti) as being in the great Heaven.

From the above it will be seen that great preparation has been made in China for Christian enlightenment in the recognition of a Power above, great, beneficent, and just, who rewards virtue and punishes vice, and who can be approached in prayer. Add but the word Fu, or Father to T'ien, as Christianity does, and the Heaven-Father becomes approachable like the earthly one. This comes as an easily apprehended idea to the people, for they have for ages spoken of Heaven as father and Earth as mother, and they have no difficulty in realizing the father-motherhood or parental relationship of God when once the idea is placed before them.

As time passed, the more general term 'Heaven' underwent a change by the addition of the word Earth. This may have been brought about by the adoption of what seems to have been the comparatively late conception of a dual Power, or powers. I am aware that this statement somewhat traverses one of the fundamental principles of Dr. de Groot's book. He says:

'The oldest and holiest books of the Empire teach that the universe consists of two souls or breaths, called Yang and Yin, the Yang representing light, warmth, productivity,

and life, also the heavens from which all these good things emanate; and the Yin being associated with darkness, cold, death, and the earth. The Yang is subdivided into an indefinite number of good souls or spirits, called shên; the Yin into particles or evil spirits, called kwei, which animate every being and every thing. It is they also which constitute the soul of man. His shên, also called hwun, immaterial, ethereal, like heaven itself from which it emanates, constitutes his intellect and the finer parts of his character, his virtues; while his kwei, or poh, is thought to represent his less refined qualities, his passions, vices, they being borrowed from material earth. Birth consists in an infusion of these souls; death in their departure, the shên returning to the Yang or heaven, the kwei to the Yin or earth. Thus man is an intrinsic part of the universe, a microcosmos, born from the macrocosmos spontaneously.'

Now it is true that the words Yin and Yang do occur in the two oldest books of China, the History and the Odes. In no case, however, do they occur in the Odes in the sense referred to by Dr. de Groot, and they occur only once in the History, and that at quite a late period. This idea of duality finds its first expression only at the beginning of the Chou dynasty, that in which Confucius lived, dating from 1122 to 255 B.C. In the Great Declaration of King Wu, the virtual founder of the new dynasty, we find him opening his declaration with the new and remarkable statement: 'Heaven and Earth are the father and mother of all creatures, and of all creatures man is the most highly endowed. The sincere, intelligent, and perspicacious (among men) becomes the great sovereign, and the great sovereign is the father and mother of the people.'

Here, then, is an apparent descent from the earlier supreme monotheism, and yet it is worthy of note that the final clause makes the one *earthly* ruler both father and mother, or parent, of the people—that is, he is the vicar of

God to them; and surely it is fair to infer therefrom a monotheism behind the heaven-earth. Nevertheless this inferior terminology and later dualistic conception have entered largely into the vocabulary both of books and of the common people, eclipsing to no small degree the simpler monotheistic idea, and now, save as it is retained in the imperial worship of Shang Ti, or in the popular T'ien, the Supreme Power is worshipped under the dual guise of T'ien-ti, or Heaven and Earth, the Universe, Nature, from the Emperor down to the commonest of the people.

I do not find any evidence of the worship of Shang Ti by the people. In all the records with which I am acquainted He is worshipped only by the Supreme Ruler on earth. It is only in the impersonal or more general form of Heaven, later of Heaven and Earth, that the people approach Him. He is through all recorded history assisted by a host of spirits or gods, and there can be little doubt that the number of these tended to increase from early times down to the period of Confucius, indeed not only until his days, but ever since. Not content with the worship of divine beings, fear of demons took possession of the people. When this began we do not know, but it is clear that kwei originally was daimon, not demon. Possibly the age-long worship of departed spirits, in the shape of ancestors, who were not only alive in another and circumambient realm, and able to bless and protect, but were also capable of bringing calamity on the evil-doer, caused a fear of the departed and of demons in general, a fear which grew, and to-day paralyses the people high and low.

That such increase in the number of objects worshipped and feared had become a burden, even in the days of Confucius, may be inferred from the Four Books, and it also seems evident that Confucius may be looked upon as a reformer of these superstitions rather than as a sceptic in

regard to religion. His attitude resembled that of Socrates, in that he was a thoroughly religious man, who believed in a moral God, and who found the increasing multitude of gods and demons, and the superstitions of the people distasteful and baneful. We are told that he would not talk about the spirits, or about marvels, and he advised that spirits should be kept at a respectful distance, by which he seems to mean that magic and spiritualism are undesirable subjects. While looking up to Heaven and reverently seeking to know and obey Its will, he apparently does not regard It as an object of formal worship, and it would seem as if, while recognizing a just Power directing all men, he entirely limited the worship of the ordinary man to his own ancestors. In the Ritual of the Chou dynasty, edited by him, we find the following delimitation of sacrifice, or religious worship:

'The Son of Heaven sacrificed to heaven and earth; to the four quarters; to the hills and streams; and offered the five (domestic) sacrifices, all in the course of the year.

'The feudal princes sacrificed to the four quarters (of their territories); to the hills and streams (in their territories); and offered the five (domestic) sacrifices; all in the course of the year.

'High officers offered the five (domestic) sacrifices.

'(All minor) officers sacrificed to their forefathers.'

As Dr. Legge says, native scholars 'all agree in maintaining that the sacrifices to forefathers were open to all, from the Son of Heaven down to the common people.' And one might almost add that while all should reverence Heaven, and obey It, and respect the spirits in general, the ancestor was the principal object of worship left by Confucius to the people. In this respect there seems no room to doubt that he came as a purifier of the polydemonistic times in which he lived. In one remarkable passage he says, 'To sacrifice

to a spirit not one's own (that is, outside one's family circle) is sycophancy.'

Nevertheless, the Puritanism of Confucius failed, because he failed, even worse than Laocius or Chuang-tzŭ, to bring the people into definite spiritual communion with the Righteous Power above, whom he reverenced and whose call he himself answered.

The worship of the dead and the introduction of Buddhism have resulted in the vast multiplication of temples to departed worthies, whom the people ignorantly worship, knowing nothing of their origin, or even of their names. And the earlier worship of nature gods, developed by the native cults, has brought into existence an innumerable host of divinities, in the heavens above, in the firmament, upon the earth, and underneath it, so that there is nothing which is not under the dominance of a spirit or divinity of some description or other, until the Chinese feels himself to be 'surrounded by a host of foes', whom he must appease if life is to be worth living. The air is full of spiritual beings, good and bad—mostly bad.

Idolatry does not seem to have existed, at any rate, not to have been common, in pre-Confucian times. It is probable that it was not in vogue until after the introduction of Buddhism. After this, the rivalry which occurred between the three religions worked for the increase of idols. One point must ever be placed to the credit of Confucianism, namely, that while it allowed images to be introduced into the popular temples, it never permitted an image to be made of Shang Ti, and has always been opposed to the multiplication of images of Confucius. Its institution of the wooden tablet, as the ancestral spirit-throne, has kept the ancestral temples largely free from idols, though pictures of the pair, male and female, who founded the clan or family which has erected the temple, are hung up on sacrificial occasions, or even permanently

painted in the niche behind the tablet. In a sense the tablet may be considered as 'animated' for it becomes sacred as the 'spirit throne' of the ancestor.[1]

Taoism has rendered little aid in the discovery of the Divine. A passage in the Tao Tê Ching says that it would seem as if Tao were before God, thus making God inferior to Tao. Chuang-tzŭ speaks of a creator, but it is not clear to whom he refers. In default of God, the Taoists of a later age have deified Laocius, and a number of other ancient worthies, especially the mythical and even historical discoverers of the laws of Nature. It has gone farther, in the apotheosis of Chang, the first Taoist pope, who is now Yü Huang Shang Ti, the Precious Imperial Shang Ti.

Neither Taoism nor Buddhism has added anything of value to the ancient Chinese idea of God, but, contrariwise, brought about its degradation. All three cults are equally responsible for the immense multiplication of 'gods' or 'saints' whom the people ignorantly worship, and who have become a dark cloud obscuring God and hiding Him from their dulled vision.

[1] P. Wieger emphatically denies this. See his *Histoire des Croyances religieuses*, p. 132.

LECTURE VI

MAN'S RELATIONSHIP AND APPROACH TO THE DIVINE

In this lecture we shall consider what are the Chinese ideas concerning man's relationship to the unseen, and his mode of approach to the divine.

However it may have arisen, whether through an animistic process or by direct revelation, the fact remains that through all known time the Chinese have possessed the instinct which led them to believe in a spiritual world outside themselves. Common to humanity all the world over, this instinct is at last being recognized by our leading philosophers, not only as a factor that has been undervalued, but as one of prime importance to philosophy, equal indeed with the importance of the intellect. Instinct leads the bee to form its marvellously mathematical cell, it gives the swallow its astonishing sense of orientation, in man it draws him out towards the unseen, and in its higher development of faith leads him upward to God, mingling his human nature with the divine. The splendour of the sun may dazzle his mortal eyes, and the air of the mountains may intoxicate him, but, far from satisfying, they only render his immortal cravings the keener, compelling his inmost soul to cry, 'Break, diviner light', as his immortal spirit strives to 'breathe diviner air'.

So has it been with the Chinese. Through all ages, from whatever humble origin it may have sprung, or however far astray it may have wandered in its purblind search, the Chinese instinct, or faith, if you like that word better, has

been groping after the divine. 'Thou hast made man for Thyself; nor can he find rest till he finds rest in Thee.' On the sublime hill-top and in the deep valley have the Chinese sought Him, and in many shapes and ways have thought that they have found Him, but their heart still cries unsatisfied. The T'ien Tan, or Altar of Heaven, is in the centre of a glorious park, where it has stood through long ages without a cover to shut its upward gaze from Heaven. Buddhist and Taoist temples and monasteries are found in all the multitudinous beauty-spots of China, men seeking, far from the madding crowd, to escape from mortals to the company of the immortals. Forty years ago, my honoured senior, the Rev. Frederick Galpin, said to me: 'Some of them tell me that they pray to their gods and their gods do answer their prayers. What do I reply? That they are mistaken? I tell them I believe their prayers *are* answered—by God, Who is a pitying Father and Who answers the sincere, even when they call Him by a wrong name. For the times of this ignorance God winked at.'

In my last lecture I endeavoured to show that from the earliest known period the Chinese have recognized a Supreme Sovereign of the Universe. The unity of creation, which they early came to discover, demanded a Supreme Power, and this Power they expressed on the one hand impersonally as T'ien, or Heaven; on the other hand, in personified form, as Shang Ti, the Supreme Ruler. While the latter term takes priority of occurrence in the oldest of the classics, I am by no means indisposed to agree with Dr. Giles that T'ien may have been the older conception. Of evidence we cannot really claim to possess any, but it is not unreasonable to suppose that the conception of Heaven as divine preceded that of Shang Ti, which latter title, with its definite idea of rulership, as I have already suggested, seems more naturally to be the outcome of an organized state of society.

If there be any confirmation of this theory it rests chiefly on the ground that while all classes of the people, through all recorded time, have prayed to Heaven without let or hindrance, there is no record of any one but the earthly ruler worshipping Shang Ti. And although the Ritual of the Chou dynasty endeavours to limit the religion of the common people to a worship of their ancestors, the worship of public or territorial divinities to territorial authorities, and the worship of Shang Ti solely to the Emperor, yet passages which I have quoted show that the ear of 'Heaven', and even of Shang Ti, was open to the cry of the people. From all which we may infer that God considered as Sovereign, in the form of Shang Ti, could only be officially approached by His vice-regent, the sovereign on earth. On the other hand, considered in the sense of Providence, T'ien or Heaven, a term which conveyed the divine idea in a more general sense, might be approached by all men.

At this point it will be well to discriminate between the recognized right of all human beings to call upon Heaven, and the limitations which accompany the idea of sacrifice. While the people at the present day make obeisance to, and call upon Heaven, as they probably have done throughout the age-long past, there exists no authorization for them in any way to offer it even the simplest sacrifice. They do offer sacrifices, and apparently to Heaven, but the only authorized sacrifice to Sovereign Heaven is that of the Emperor, even as he also is the one and only priest, or pontifex maximus, of Heaven.

It is worthy of note that while T'ien is often used, even in one and the same sentence, as a substitute for, or connotation of, Shang Ti in the sovereign aspect, Shang Ti is not used as an alternative for T'ien. The close connexion of the two terms, however, is manifest in that, down to the present day, the altar upon which the Emperor offers sacrifice to Shang Ti is styled T'ien Tan, or Altar of

Heaven. In short, as Dr. Legge has pointed out, the Chinese have used Shang Ti somewhat in the same manner as the Israelites used the sovereign name of Jehovah, and T'ien in the wider sense of Elohim.

Whoever he may be who approaches a deity, or whatever that deity may be, the recognized form of approach, in one sense, is universal—that is to say, the approach is seldom or never made with empty hands. From the Emperor, who, after his ceremonial fasting, presents his elaborate sacrifice to Shang Ti, down to the meanest in the land, whose only offering may be inexpensive sticks of incense, or a couple of small candles added thereto, approach is made with an offering of some sort. From the whole burnt-offering of a bullock made by the Emperor to God, down to the fowl which the poor man offers to his deity and then shares with his family, sacrifice is universal throughout the land.

Such sacrifices are not looked upon as expiatory, but either purely and simply as propitiatory, or, as thank-offerings for favours received. The pig is the most popular sacrificial animal, but all the other domestic animals are also offered, indeed almost every kind of human food, so that hundreds of thousands of animals, probably millions, are slain every year and offered as propitiatory oblations or thankofferings. They are offered, not only to the gods, but also to the ancestors, whose spirits continue to exert their parental rights and require to be made happy with the sweet savour of the good things of this life. From early times the flesh of sacrifice has been shared with friends after the ceremony, and the recipients are supposed to esteem the food which the spirits have enjoyed, not as an ordinary favour, but as possessed of some mystic benefit.

I have introduced the subject of sacrifice at this point to show that it forms the principal method of approach to gods and spirits alike. Nor is sacrifice confined to gods and

good spirits, for 'demon' or 'devil worship' is exceedingly common, and sacrifices, both private and public, are offered in order to placate them and thus induce them to withdraw their unwelcome attentions. But the character and mode of sacrifice, especially of imperial sacrifice, will be dealt with when we discuss Official Religion.

What I now wish to direct attention to, as of more immediate importance, is the subject of Prayer. Judging from the few statements in regard thereto recorded in the Book of History, prayer, when offered in ancient times, was extempore, taking the form of a bare announcement. Some prayers even then were written. The custom which generally obtains to-day is that the prayer is written, read before the altar, and then burnt, or posted upon or near to the shrine. In ancient times paper did not exist, so that prayers which were written had to be inscribed upon slips of bamboo or wood, or later, silk.

One instance of such a prayer and its preservation is found in the History, in the chapter called 'The Metal-bound Coffer'. King Wu being at the point of death, his affectionate brother, Duke Wên, took upon himself to sacrifice and pray to three of their common ancestors, generously offering his life in place of the king's. The divination which followed indicated that the king would recover, but the prayer was preserved in the coffer. The king died two years later, and when, some time afterwards, the prayer, showing the generosity and loyalty of Duke Wên, was brought out, his nephew, the youthful emperor, was profoundly affected by the noble spirit of his uncle, who had been appointed as his guardian as well as regent of the Empire. While the prayer was offered not to God, but to the imperial ancestors, it reveals a manliness which calls for our admiration. Here is what it says:

'Your chief descendant (the king) is suffering from a severe and dangerous sickness;—if you three kings have

in heaven the charge (of watching over him, Heaven's) great son, let me be a substitute for his person. I have been lovingly obedient to my father; I am possessed of many abilities and arts which fit me to serve spiritual beings. Your chief descendant, on the other hand, has not so many abilities and arts as I have, and is not so capable of serving spiritual beings. Moreover, he was appointed in the hall of God to extend his aid to the four quarters (of the Empire), so that he might establish your descendants in this lower world. The people of the four quarters stand in reverent awe of him. Oh! do not let that precious Heaven-conferred appointment fall to the ground, and (all) our former kings will also have a perpetual reliance and resort. I will now seek for your orders from the great tortoise. If you grant (what I request), I will take these symbols and this mace, and return and wait for the issue. If you do not grant it, I will put them by.'[1]

Prayer, however, is not a prominent characteristic in the ancient books, nor in our meaning of the term, embodying adoration, communion with God, or entreaty for spiritual exaltation and development, has it ever formed an enriching quality of Chinese worship. Of old and now its chief form has been an invocation for some special, and generally if not always, some merely temporal, blessing. In ancient times, as in the present day, prayers have been offered in case of sickness, and divination resorted to for knowledge of the answer. When Confucius was ill, his disciples proposed that prayers should be made for him, but he declined by saying enigmatically: 'My praying has been for long.'

This is a saying we can effectively use in the present generation, when hysterical superstitions prevail. Confucius had a sublime faith that Heaven could do no wrong, that It had given him his mission as well as his life, and that he was immortal till his work for Heaven was done.

[1] Legge's *Religions of China.*

On the only other occasion when prayer is mentioned in the Analects, it is in an answer given to a certain high officer, who sought to gain over Confucius to his side, but of whom Confucius disapproved. In the form of a question this officer gave Confucius a broad hint that it would be advantageous to become his ally. 'What is the meaning', he craftily inquired, 'of the saying, "It is better to pay court to the god of the hearth (i.e. the kitchen god, or spiritual major-domo, indicating himself), than to the god of the hall (i.e. the nominal spiritual head of the household, indicating the prince)"?' 'Not so,' replied Confucius, in similar cryptic fashion; 'he who sins against Heaven has nowhere left for prayer.' This is one of the best sayings of Confucius, and is of no small value as showing that Confucius recognized the supremacy of Heaven, that appeal to It was possible even for those not occupying the imperial throne, and that such appeal was final.

While the various words used for sacrifice are of frequent occurrence, the rarity of the words used for prayer throughout the Confucian classics is very noticeable. They occur only some half a dozen times throughout the whole, and throw but little light on the attitude of the ancients in this regard. Such instances as do occur, or are associated with them, all refer to merely temporal benefits. This is the Confucian attitude to this day. As a high Chinese official once expressed it, 'You may *inform* Heaven what you wish, but you may not *pray* to It.' And when asked, 'But what do you do, then?' he replied, 'Why, nothing; what can we do? We just await the will of Heaven.' Such is in theory the fatalistic or philosophical attitude of the Confucianist, but in practice other members of his family are not so stoical, nor is he himself when the troubles of life press hard upon him. Then other gods in the Pantheon are resorted to with offerings and with written or spoken prayers. In sorrow and tribulation the Chinese

are like the rest of mankind; they cry to the great Unknown and seek help and comfort wherever help and comfort may be found.

Taoism, in its original form, was even less concerned with prayer than was Confucianism. Its doctrine of passivity rendered petition unnecessary, even if it were of any use. Put yourself in line with Tao, float along the divine stream—there was nothing else to do but this—and such being the case, prayer was unnecessary. But the Taoist of to-day is the principal prayer-monger in the country. The 'priest', lay or cleric, spends much of his time in petitioning the gods on behalf of his clients, and in divining for their will. Prayer for rain has been made from ancient times in China, and the Taoist 'priest' now is the principal instigator and officiator in these annual acts of worship. One might justly style him the chief 'rain-maker' of the country. In like manner he takes the leading part in the incantations by which evil spirits are expelled, whether they be from the person of a single individual or house, or from a village or town, as in the case of the terrible cholera demon. Taoist and Buddhist priests also intone the chants over the dead, and pray to the rulers of purgatory to release the departed and suffering soul. But this is not Chinese in origin, nor can we even say that it is really Buddhist. It may be an adaptation of ideas introduced from farther West.

In primitive Buddhism there is no provision for prayer, but in the Mahāyāna school prayers are made to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and especially to Amitābha and the Buddhist Madonna the Goddess of Mercy, the worship of whom is of comparatively late date. The Buddhist of the Lamaistic school, which is common in the north, goes about with his 'praying-wheel' in his hand, or turns the great prayer-cylinder he finds so often at the roadside, and throughout China flags and streamers offer

unceasing invocations as they wave to and fro in the fields. It is therefore impossible to consider China as a prayerless country, seeing that prayer in some form or another utters itself on every breeze.

It is in Buddhism, perhaps, that the highest ground is found in prayer, possibly through the infiltration of Western and Christian notions. Multitudes, especially of women, cry to the Goddess of Mercy, 'O thou who hearest the cries of the world, and who savest those in bitterness and trouble'; but for the most part even their prayer is mundane in its aims. The Buddhist monk or devotee spends much time in droning parts of his canon, the interpretation of which is utterly beyond him, or in unceasing repetition of the words, 'Namo, O-mi-to-fo', 'Glory to Amitābha'. In seasons of real distress he, too, breaks away from his forms, and cries to the heavens, just as ages ago did the Taoist mentioned by Chuang-tzŭ, when he cried, 'O father, O mother, O heaven, O man!' and as mankind does the world over.

In regard to the relationship of sacrifice and prayer it may be pointed out that in the Li Chi, the Book of Rites, Confucius makes the important statement that 'with sacrifice there should not be prayer, for this would imply a desire for personal advantage'. It will thus be seen that the sacrifice is considered as itself prayer. Indeed, there seems reason to believe that sacrifice, without the spoken word, was the earliest form of prayer not only in China, but amongst the Israelites, and indeed throughout the world. No doubt this idea has received full consideration and presentation by others, though I cannot recall having met with it in the course of my reading. In China, at any rate, sacrifice seems to have preceded, or included, prayer.

There is another point to which the discussion of sacrifice naturally leads, and that is the office of priest.

In Western countries the offering of sacrifices resulted, in most cases, in the separation of a special class, male and even female, to form the priesthood. So far as China is concerned, however, the line of Aaron finds no counterpart. In ancient times, though officers were appointed to guard the temples and prepare the temple sacrifices, they did not form a separate class, nor were they a sacrificial priesthood. The Emperor was the High Priest of Heaven for the whole nation, the Prince was Prince-priest in his domain, the chief was priest for the clan, and the father priest for his household. Such in general still remains the idea and practice of the priesthood in China.

A certain amount of modification has of course taken place since the advent of Buddhism, and to-day Taoist and Buddhist so-called 'priests' and monks do form a separate body, performing duties which we associate with the idea of the priesthood, such, for instance, as the presentation of offerings, invocation and prayer, divination and the performance of funeral ceremonies. A separated priesthood of this kind is not found in Confucianism, consequently the State has found it convenient, at times, to employ both Buddhist and Taoist priests in certain ceremonials connected with the national religion, in a way which certainly would not meet with the approval of Confucius.

In Buddhism and Taoism we find large numbers of 'priests', very few of whom are hampered by education. Buddhism also has large numbers of nunneries, which in places suffer occasional suppression, generally on the charge of immorality. Buddhist monks and nuns have the head completely shaven. Their monasteries and nunneries are often well-endowed. Where such is not the case they support themselves by begging from their clients. In education, morals, and religion Buddhism in China is at a very low ebb.

The Taoists have a regular and a lay order. The regular priests are unshaven, wearing the beard, and also having the hair done up in a top-knot after the fashion of the ancient Chinese. The lay priests are generally married, and gain their livelihood by all kinds of performances associated with their superstitious form of religion. They are the prime leaders of magic and sorcery, which, as in other nations, is of prehistoric origin, and are the high priests of Animism. In a sense these men are also the self-constituted priests of the lower forms of the national religion, which for lack of a better term we place under Confucianism, though Confucius would disclaim the connexion. They are open to any kind of engagement, whether exorcizing devils, releasing souls from hell, seeking the advice of the gods through divination or through a spiritualistic medium, organizing public processions to escort away with great *éclat* the demons of plague, arranging theatrical performances to celebrate the 'birthdays' of the gods—indeed, there is not a stroke of superstitious business in which they are not prepared to take a hand and turn a doubtful penny.

It is a matter of complete indifference to such a priest what god or devil, Confucian, Taoist, or Buddhist, is to be propitiated, or what poverty-stricken pilferer of cabbages he is called upon to curse, in bed or board, by road or river, in every part of his anatomy, together with all his progenitors and descendants—all is grist to his mill, for he is the descendant of the primitive rain-maker and magician, and lives by the woes of his fellows. Did these woes not exist, he would have to create them, which in point of fact he does, for he has to live! The Buddhist priest may be low, ignorant, and superstitious, but for the most part, except among the semi-barbaric Lamas, he is comatose and harmless. The Taoist priest, and especially the lay priest, or exorcizer, has a mind so utterly warped that it is almost

beyond the possibility of being straightened. Even as a convert to Christianity he seems to see things asquint, and St. Paul's rebuke to his Greek brother fits still in China—'O full of all subtilty, thou child of the devil.'

The lay priestesses, pythonesses, or exorcizers, are like unto their brethren. Often they are married women, whose husbands live on their earnings. They act chiefly as spiritualistic mediums, the goddess, or goddesses, upon whom they call, taking possession of them and speaking through them. One such, whose house and shrine were beneath my study window, was consulted almost daily by her clients, and the two goddesses who were at her beck and call did not add to my comfort as they consulted aloud through the lips of the woman, one in a deep, the other in a shrill tone.

This brings us to the subject of Divination. It is clear, throughout the history of the Chinese religions, that the gods and spirits may not only be approached, but that their will may be made known. One important point, however, I should like to see more fully elucidated—namely, whether the will of God or Heaven has ever been directly sought by divination. I have not found such an instance. In ancient times divination was limited almost solely, if not indeed entirely, to seeking the approval, or learning of the disapproval of the ancestors who, through the instruments of divination, were supposed to be able to communicate with their descendants on earth. They were credited with the power to express the divine will in this respect. It is true that the will of Heaven might be known to men, not so much for particular purposes as in a greater and more general sense. Men might—the Emperors, and even rulers who raised the standard of rebellion did—make announcements to Heaven, or to God, that they proposed to do certain things, believed that they had received the divine will to do them,

and, on their successful completion, made further announcement of such completion. But divination originally seems to have been limited to the ancestral temple. With the apotheosis of other gods or spirits, especially the spirits of dead heroes or ministers, divination underwent a wider extension. To-day there are few temples wherein its instruments are not an important part of the paraphernalia. A remarkable exception is the temples to Confucius, and this may indicate that the higher thought of China is opposed to indiscriminate divination, and at any rate, so far as Confucius is concerned, that they will not have him contemned by turning him into an oracle. I will not say that my statement is correct as to all Confucian temples, but they are all on the same model, and not having observed the instruments in any temple which I have visited leads me to the conclusion that they are universally absent.

The ancient instruments of divination were stalks of a certain kind of grass and tortoise-shells. The tortoise is the emblem of longevity or immortality. Though the resemblance is not evident, it is from the marks on its back that Fu-hsi is said to have invented the great divining symbol, the pa-kua. Just as the classics of China are clean, and can unhesitatingly be put into the hands of the young, so in divination the Chinese never seem to have indulged in the gross observance of the entrails of a sheep as with the Romans, nor do we find much evidence of phallic worship, or the religious prostitution of men and women, or the unutterable orgies of Hellenic or Semitic degradation. The religions of China may distress by their superstition, but they seldom shock by their grossness.

Nor is there any evidence that the Chinese ever divined by watching the flight of birds, as did the Roman augurs, though they have always looked upon certain birds and

beasts as harbingers of good or ill omen, and disembodied spirits frequently take the shape of were-wolves, foxes, tigers, birds, and so on. In ancient times the phoenix was the principal bird of good omen, and when it appeared it was a divine messenger clearly indicating the rise of a sage or a sage sovereign. An unusual kind of deer was caught a little while before the death of Confucius, who is said to have recognized it as the deer which had appeared to his mother at his birth, and which now came to announce that his work was done.

Divination has changed and increased its instruments since the days of Confucius. The most common one now is the kidney-shaped root of a bamboo, split down the middle so as to produce two halves, each with a convex and a flat side. After the offering has been made, and sometimes the object of the inquiry stated, the two pieces are thrown to the ground. If they fall, one face up, the other face down, the augury is favourable; in any other position it is unfavourable.

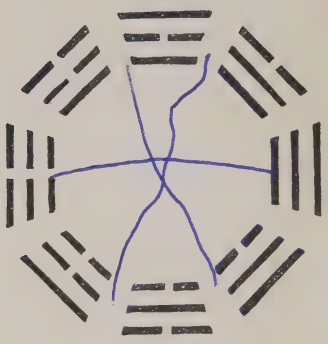
Another method of discovering the will of the god is by the planchette. This is no modern innovation, as in Europe, but dates back to an early period. The stylus is attached to a framework slung from a beam, and the deity is then supposed to guide the hands of the manipulator in the writing of cabalistic signs impossible of interpretation save by the initiated!

Still another amongst other methods is to shake three from amongst a number of bamboo slips placed in a bamboo tube. The three slips tally with strips of paper kept by the priest, who hands to the worshipper copies on which are written certain verses. These are considered to indicate the character of the prognosis. A colleague of my own once induced a priest to give him the papers corresponding with the slips he shook out of the bamboo tube. They announced to him that he would have a son,

and sure enough the son put in his appearance a short time after!

Dreams are also resorted to in order to obtain divine direction. I knew a scholar, a Confucianist, who several times resorted to a temple, each time spending the night in comfortless sleep, awaiting the dream the god would give him by way of direction as to the course he should pursue. He was not enthusiastic over the result.

In conclusion, then, it will, I think, be clear to you that the Chinese have no doubt as to the possibility of approach to the divine beings, or that these can make their will known to men. So material, however, is their mind that such approach is for the most part made for mundane purposes, and seldom for moral or spiritual development. In none of the three religions do we find that communion with the divine in prayer, that intensity of adoration, that rapture of God, that splendour of entry into the Divine Presence, that yearning to partake of His moral and spiritual nature, and share in His holiness, which is to be found in the religion which Moses and the prophets, the Christ of God and His apostles and saints, have revealed to the world.



PA-KUA.

T'AI CHI.

LECTURE VII

COSMOLOGICAL IDEAS

As amongst the other races of humanity, so amongst the Chinese, there is little or nothing to show that the primitive race had obtained a sufficient purview of Nature, as a whole, to trouble itself about the riddle of the universe. The two oldest books, namely, the History and the Odes, leave us in ignorance of the ideas of the ancients in regard to the creation of the universe and of man. It is not until we reach the Chou dynasty, the Augustan age of China, that we meet with the consideration of philosophical ideas. The book which forms the foundation for much of the subsequent speculation is the Yi Ching, one of the five canonical classics, and commonly called the Book of Changes—a very inadequate translation of its title.

Certain writers, Dr. de Groot amongst them, have fallen into the error of styling it the oldest book in China. Such is not the case. In its present form it does not date earlier than the days of Confucius, probably much later. The whole book is founded on a symbol, peculiarly Chinese, known as the pa-kua 八卦. This symbol has had two forms, the original form being attributed to Fu-hsi, the first semi-historical ruler (2852 B. C.). In the twelfth century B. C. it was altered by King Wên. He wiled away the hours of his imprisonment at the hands of the Emperor Chou Hsin, the Nero of the Shang, or second, dynasty, by doubling its combinations, rearranging them in a different order, and writing brief notes thereon. His son, King Wu, who ultimately overthrew Chou Hsin,

and established the third, or Chou, dynasty, added another very brief dissertation. Two older explanations of the original symbol had previously existed, but of these we know nothing.

Confucius became much interested in the pa-kua, and also in the brief explanations of Wên and Wu. He is said to have worn out the leathern thongs of his copy three times, and in the Analects we are told that he said, if his life could only be prolonged, he would devote fifty years to the study of the Yi, and then he would be free from great errors. The interpretation of the passage is disputed, but there is no doubt that it expresses his high opinion of the symbol. His chief interest in its permutations and combinations was of an ethical order, for he sought to show their influence in the moral cosmos.

Dr. Legge thinks that the 'trigrams were originally devised simply as aids to divination'. That they became such is true, but that they were originally devised for that purpose is improbable. It is far more likely that they are a relic of the 'knotted cord' or quipus period, indicating certain astronomical observations. The word Yi 易, the title of the Book of Changes, is composed of sun and moon, and in ordinary usage the unbroken (shall we say unknotted?) lines are styled Yang, which is also a common name for the sun; the broken (knotted?) lines are styled Yin, which is a common name for the moon. Confucius, or one of his disciples, definitely states in the Yi Ching that it is an endeavour to express the phenomena of Nature. He says:

'The Sage (King Wên) was able to survey all the complex phenomena under the sky. He then considered in his mind how they could be figured, and (by means of the diagrams) represented their material forms and characters. Hence these (diagrams) are denominated hsiang', or emblematic figures.

Amongst numerous other explanations that have been suggested, Leibnitz offered a numerical solution of the meaning of the Yi, and seems to have founded his 'binary system' upon it. Canon MacClatchie considered the octagon to be related to the ogdoad of Western mythologists, the father, mother, three sons and three daughters, who founded the human race, for these eight family relationships are also applied to the respective sides of the octagon.

It is from this enigmatic work, the Yi Ching, that the famous dualistic theory is said to have taken its rise. Of this, I may say that the original notes of Wên and Wu give no evidence, nor is it until the appendices were added by Confucius, or his disciples, that the words Yin and Yang appear. Wên and Wu were almost certainly not the inventors of the Yin-yang system. A dualistic terminology certainly existed in their day, but it had not attained to the clear definition which it obtained later. This dualistic terminology has evidently been the outgrowth of later philosophical speculation, for Yin 陰 and Yang 陽, in their modern connotation, find little or no place in the Confucian classics, or in the Tao Tê Ching of Laocius. The terms are used by Chuang-tzŭ, but it was not until the Sung dynasty, a thousand years ago, that the system took possession of the Chinese in its elaborated form.

Chu-tzŭ, the great Sung dynasty commentator and authority on the classics and philosophy, who lived in the twelfth century A.D., dealt with the pa-kua, and wrote an elaborate treatise on natural philosophy. His ideas have been the orthodoxy of China until now. The forty-ninth section of his work was translated by Canon MacClatchie forty years ago, but his interpretation did not meet with acceptance amongst Sinologues. His translation needs revision; indeed, the whole of the philosophy of the Sung period

calls for examination and exposition at the hands of one who will clothe it in modern philosophical terminology.[1]

We should not be much wiser if we learned the secret of this puzzling diagram, but I think we may look upon it with interest, as being one of the earliest symbols we possess of the rise of humanity, Chinese humanity at any rate, out of a primitive barbarism, into civilized conditions. The fact that the lines are odd and even and that the octagon indicates the eight points of the compass has led me somewhat empirically to associate the diagram with a primitive numerical system, or with some arrangement of the seasons in calendar form, or both. When we consider the importance of the discovery of a numerical system, in place of the separate naming of each article, as is still the method with some savage tribes, we can better realize what an immense advance the discovery of such a system would mean. The perplexities of the modern science of numbers are as nothing to the distance which separated the man who could add together a few simple numerical symbols from the man who could not put two and two together.

Again, the four seasons, the months, the rotation of the year, are taken for granted by us, and we think nothing of them. Such was not the case with man in his infancy. Our printed calendars tell us when it is the first day of the year, and of the month, when it is the vernal and autumnal equinox, when the moon will wax and wane, when the sun and moon will be eclipsed and to what extent. It was not so in primaeval China. The calendar did not exist, the procession of the months and of the seasons, and the length of the solar years were undetermined. Even after

[1] Dr. J. P. Bruce has dealt with part of it in his recently issued *Philosophy of Human Nature* (Chu Hsi), and *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Chu Hsi and the Sung School* (Probsthain).

the invention of the calendar it was constantly going wrong. For instance, in the Book of History we find that one of the first duties of every sovereign on his accession was to correct the calendar. That the determination of the solar year was a matter of great difficulty we can see from our Western history, for it is only since the days of Gregory that we have had a correct calendar; and Russia still follows the pre-Gregorian method.

When, therefore, the early Chinese added their simple science of numbers to the observation of the heavens, they could not fail to discover that all the complex movements of the heavenly bodies and the innumerable changes which took place on the earth were under the governance of law, and that in fact they lived in the midst of a universe. That is to say, that the course (Tao) or law of Nature was homogeneous, exhibiting itself in innumerable heterogeneous forms through a dualistic division, of an antinomial or mutually complementary character, which took the shape of light and darkness, positive and negative, male and female, good and evil, and so on. The dualistic part of this discovery, however, does not seem to have been fully made, or at any rate stated, until the middle or end of the Chou dynasty; indeed, research may yet prove that the dualistic philosophy was an importation from Babylonian sources. So much, then, for the pa-kua. Now let us turn to other conceptions.

The Confucian school, in its commendable distrust of the marvellous, has naturally preserved fewer of the myths and legends of the race than has the Taoist school, whose belief in the bizarre has led not only to the preservation of ancient myths, often in much adulterated form, but to the addition of multitudes of later ones. The fertile imagination of Hinduism has also stimulated Chinese imitation, and now it is difficult to discriminate between many of the myths as they were held by the ancient Chinese, and the

same and other myths as influenced by Buddhist importations.

The popular conception of creation is that the cosmos originally took the form of a huge egg, a sort of *ovum mundi*, in which was produced a being, or demiurge, known as P'an-ku, who is also called 'Chaos', or 'the Chaos man', which probably means he who first brought order out of chaos. He is represented in pictorial form as a giant busy with hammer and chisel carving out the rocks and shaping the universe. Another account is that it was his death which gave birth to the existing material universe. 'His breath was transmuted into the wind and clouds, his voice into thunder, his left eye into the sun, and his right into the moon; his four limbs and five extremities into the four quarters of the globe and the five great mountains, his blood into the rivers, his muscles and veins into the strata of the earth, his flesh into the soil, his hair and beard into the constellations, his skin and the hair thereon into plants and trees, his teeth and bones into the metals, his marrow into pearls and precious stones, the sweat of his body into rain, and the parasites upon him, impregnated by the wind, into the human species.'[1]

Dr. Carus points out that this is 'a Chinese version not only of the Norse myth of the Giant Ymir, but also of the Babylonian story of Tiamat'. Inasmuch, also, as 'P'an' means a bowl, basin, or other hollowed vessel, and 'ku' means ancient, or else, solid, firm, according as the character is written, he says, 'Obviously the name means "aboriginal abyss", or in the terser German, Urgrund, and we have reason to believe it to be a translation of the Babylonian Tiamat, "the Deep".' While not disputing the probable common origin of the myth, I would warn you that Dr. Carus's method of interpretation is obviously unusual, and the meaning not as clear as he declares. As

[1] Mayers' *Chinese Readers' Manual*, No. 558.

a matter of fact both the term and its origin are involved in obscurity. We do not know when it came into use in China. No mention is made of it in ancient literature, nor by Sz-ma Ch'ien, China's first great historian, though the lack of such reference would not disprove the antiquity of its origin.

During the Han dynasty of nearly two thousand years ago, evidently under Hindu stimulus, we are told that from the creation to the capture of the lin, a rare kind of deer which Confucius believed to portend his death, 2,267,000 and odd years had elapsed, a period which a thousand years ago, during the Sung dynasty, was increased to 3,276,000 years. This period is divided into ten epochs, the founder of the first being the above-named P'an-ku, the first created being. I need not enter into a discussion of these epochs, beyond saying that in the eighth of them we are told that the spinning of silk was invented, that one of the rulers is known as the Nest-possessor (suggesting that he was the first to make for himself a dwelling), and that he was followed by Sui-jen, the fire-producing man, that is, the Chinese Prometheus. The ninth of these epochs produced Fu-hsi, or Pao-hsi, who is generally accounted the first semi-historical sovereign of China, and the founder of civilization. His period is placed from 2852 to 2738 B. C. Like others of China's early sovereigns, he is said to have been miraculously conceived, his mother becoming pregnant by the inspiration of Heaven, and his gestation lasting twelve years. Before his day the people are declared to have lived like beasts, clothing themselves in leaves or skins, eating raw meat with its hair and blood, knowing their mothers but not their fathers, and pairing without decency. Fu-hsi taught them to cook their food, to sow and reap, and to make musical instruments with spun silk. He also displaced the use of knotted cords by his discovery of the art of writing, an art that is believed

to have been divinely revealed to him on the back of a dragon-horse, which appeared to him from the Yellow River. To him is also contributed the establishment of the laws of marriage, the formation of the calendar, and the invention of the pa-kua in its original form.

I have given the above to show you that the Chinese clearly recognize that civilization has been progressive, and that man has risen to the position he now occupies from the stage which is not 'little lower than the angels', but little higher than the beast.

When we turn from these legends to inquire what the ancient philosophers have to tell us of the creation of the universe, we find little to help us. This is especially the case with Confucius and his disciples. The Confucian school was essentially of a politico-moral character, and to Confucius any speculation outside the realm of the merely practical made little appeal. Nor do we find any help from Laocius, whose system is, in a sense, equally politico-moral with that of his contemporary, though it is based on the apparently anarchical doctrine of inaction, or each man living according to natural law.

In Chuang-tzŭ we discover a much greater advance. In several places he speaks of Tao or the law of Heaven, as if it were a living entity, and the Creator and Transformer of all things. For instance, in Book VI he says that Tao 'has its root and ground (of existence) in itself. Before there were heaven and earth, from of old, there it was, securely existing. From it came the mysterious existences of spirits, from it the mysterious existence of God. It produced heaven; it produced earth. It was before the T'ai Chi'—that is, before the primordial ether, out of which all material things came into existence.

In another place in the same chapter he puts into the mouth of a deformed man, a Taoist, the saying, 'How great is the Creator! That he (or it) should have made me the

deformed creature that I am!' Yet he would not complain. Further on he puts into the mouth of another the words, 'O my Master! O my Master! He (or It) gives to all their blended qualities, and does not count it any righteousness; His favours reach to all generations, and He does not count it any benevolence; He is more ancient than the highest antiquity, and does not count Himself old; He overspreads heaven and supports the earth; He carves and fashions all bodily forms, and does not consider it any act of skill;—this is He in whom I find my enjoyment.' Whom the He (or It) represents, whether Tao, or a living sentient Power within the Tao, is not clear.

Again in Book XII he says, 'In the Grand Beginning (of all things) there was nothing in all the vacancy of space; there was nothing that could be named. It was in this state that there arose the first existence—the first existence, but still without form. From this, things could then be produced, with what we call their own characteristics. That which had no form (or Chaos) was divided; and then without intermission there was what we call the process of conferring. The two processes continuing in operation, things were produced. As things were completed, there were produced the distinguishing lines of each, which we call form. That form was the body preserving in it the spirit, and each had its special manifestation, which we call its nature.'

Again in Book XIII he says, 'It was the way of the Emperors and Kings to regard Heaven and Earth as their Author, the Tao and its characteristics as their Lord, and Inaction as their constant rule.'

And as a last instance, I will quote from Book XIV, where he says, 'How (ceaselessly) heaven revolves. How (constantly) earth abides at rest. And do the sun and moon contend about their (respective) places? Who presides over and directs these (things)? Who binds and connects

them together? Who is it that, without trouble and exertion on his part, causes and maintains them? Is it perhaps that there is some secret spring, in consequence of which they cannot be but as they are? Or, is it, perhaps, that they move and turn as they do, and cannot stop of themselves? (Then) how the clouds become rain! And how the rain again forms the clouds! Who diffuses them so abundantly? Who is it that, without trouble and exertion on his part, produces this elemental enjoyment, and seems to stimulate it? The winds rise in the north'; and so on.

Here in Chuang-tzŭ, then, we have the inquiring mind, and he seems to answer the eternal question with the assertion that there is intelligence behind the phenomena of Nature, that all that exists has been created by mind, and that from a primordial ether all things were evolved into the myriad forms in which he found them.

The introduction of Buddhism with its Hindu speculations undoubtedly acted as a stimulus, nevertheless Chinese speculation has never really left the base on which early Chinese thought founded its philosophy. That base is the partially developed idea of a primitive monism, ultimately dividing to form a dualism, an idea which we find in both the Confucian and Taoist schools. Dr. Legge says, that 'it took more than a thousand years after the closing of the Yi (the Book of Changes) to fashion in the Confucian school the doctrine of a primary matter'. This may be correct of the Confucian school, but it is not correct of the Taoist, for we find it expressed in Chuang-tzŭ. The doctrine does not seem to have received general acceptance and exposition in the Confucian school until the beginning of the present millennium, under the influence of the famous Confucian scholar, Chu Hsi, of the Sung dynasty. It is well known, however, that Chu Tzŭ was well versed in and influenced by Taoist and Buddhist speculations, as well as

by the orthodox works of which he became the great exponent.

Now during the present millennium the doctrine of Yin and Yang has entered so intimately into the philosophy, the religion, and the practices of the people, that in discussing the religions of China we cannot afford to ignore it. Dr. de Groot finds in animism the primaeval form of the Chinese religion and its very core to this day, and clearly holds that this animism from primitive times has been recognized as of a dualistic Yin-yang character. Animism may properly be considered as the primaeval form of the Chinese religion, equally with that of every other religion, our own included. But, however interesting it may be, in examining the origin of religion, to look at 'the hole of the rock from which it was digged', it is of far greater interest and value to look at that which has been dug out, see what work it has done, into what shape it has been chiselled, and what beauty of tracery has been carved upon it. Animism was the primaeval form of the Chinese religion, and in that early period, to their and our forefathers, the hill, the stream, and every other natural phenomenon each had its immanent soul, its indwelling genius. But the Chinese, ages ago, arose from the idea of immanence to that of transcendence, and, as I have already indicated, the images and trees and streams of China are now no more animated, in the sense of immanence, than are the images of the saints in a Roman or Greek church, and even less than are the animated elements in the Mass.

In brief, then, while animism was the primaeval form of the Chinese religion, I cannot find sufficient proof that the dualistic doctrine of Yin and Yang, which is such an integral part of Dr. de Groot's theory, and which undoubtedly plays a powerful part in the religion, philosophy, and practice of modern times, is anything like as ancient as Dr. de Groot considers it to be. The history of this dualism

still calls for careful study and elucidation, and I must speak, therefore, with a measure of hesitation; but in the ancient books there is nothing to show that the dualistic theory was one of the primitive ideas of the Chinese. We do not find it mentioned, in the modern sense, either in the Book of History or the Odes. It is referred to in the Book of Rites, which, however, in its present form is of much later date. As to the Yi Ching, or Book of Changes, to which Dr. de Groot specifically refers, it is not in the old part, composed by King Wên and his son King Wu. Indeed, not until the days of Confucius, late in the dynasty, was the Yin and the Yang introduced, and even then not as a developed system.

What the position of the Yin and Yang theory was during the first millennium of our era I do not know, but apparently not until the beginning of the present millennium, dating from the Sung period, and especially during the period of Chu Tzŭ, did this theory, with all its elaborations, take possession of Chinese life. That it has ruled life in modern times is very manifest, and I fully agree with Dr. de Groot in his description of its powerful influence in the present day.

What, then, is this dualistic cosmological theory, this twin-flanged key, which opens the mystery of the universe? Briefly it is as follows. At the beginning there was nothing, all was empty and void. Then, whether spontaneously or by a Creator is not clear, matter came into existence as a formless ether. This chaotic ether is known as the T'ai Chi, that is, the Grand Ultimate, or Primal Matter. Gyrating through a long period, it divided into two parts, one of which, being gross and heavy, precipitated to form the earth; the other, being finer and lighter, remained in suspension to form the Heavens. That part which precipitated is called the Yin, the other the Yang.

As already shown, the word Yi in Yi Ching, the Book of

Changes, from which this dualism is said to have sprung, is composed of two parts, the upper half meaning the sun, the lower half the moon. Yang has also come to mean the sun, and Yin the moon, but they also mean light and darkness, and in the course of time have come to connote a wide variety of antinomial ideas, such as positive and negative, male and female, and so on. Indeed, they are often styled by European writers the 'male and female principle'. The two earlier terms for this dualistic idea were ch'ien, which means heaven, hard, strong, &c., and k'un which means earth, soft, weak, and so on. Both the earlier terms ch'ien and k'un, and the later terms yang and yin may often be rendered by 'the universe'.

Whatever the origin, then, the fact remains that dualism has become the working theory of Chinese philosophy, and entered into the most intimate relations of national and domestic life. Everything in nature is either yin or yang. Heaven, light, warmth, masculinity, paternity, strength, productivity, life, are all yang. The earth, darkness, cold, femininity, maternity, weakness, death, are all yin.

The principle is also carried into the unseen realm, and it must be borne in mind that nowhere in the world does a people dwell in the midst of, and allow itself to be controlled by, a spirit world more than in China. The circumambient is less air than it is spirits, but far from being immanent they are conceived of as constantly coming and going. They come singly or in battalions. They swarm everywhere, outnumbering the millions of China. And the unseen world has been conceived of as an exact replica of the Middle Kingdom. Shang Ti is the Spirit Emperor, and he has his hosts of officers, with yamens, lictors, prisons, tortures, and innumerable spirit people.

These spirits also accord with the dualistic idea, and, if we would, we cannot be unduly critical, seeing that a dualism is found in our own system, the dualism of good and bad

spirits. So in the Chinese conception of the unseen world there are yang or good spirits, and yin or evil spirits. It is, however, doubtful whether this division was clearly made in ancient times. Two terms are now used to express the notion of these spirits—namely, shên for benevolent spirits, and kuei for malevolent ones. But originally shên was used chiefly, if not entirely, for nature spirits, and it only came into use for the embodied or disembodied human spirit during a later period. Shên now is yang and denotes benevolent spirits, whether nature gods, or the good disembodied human spirit. It is even used for the embodied human spirit.

The other term, denoting yin or malevolent spirits, is kuei, a term originally meaning daimon in the sense of the disembodied human spirit. Time has limited its meaning amongst the Chinese, as with ourselves, to denote malevolent spirits of every kind. Kuei-shên are often spoken of together in the classics to cover the meaning of the spirits in general, but the daimon had not then become demon, and the term denoted the nature spirits and disembodied human spirits. For instance—and this bears also on the question of transcendence—Confucius says, 'How richly do the spirits manifest their virtuous power! We look, but do not see them; we listen, but do not hear them; . . . they cause all under heaven to fast and become clean, and to array themselves in their richest dresses, in order to attend to their sacrifices. Then in an overflowing stream they seem to be overhead and on every side.'[1]

There is no evidence to show that the spirits were divided, even during the Confucian period, into yang and yin, in the sense of benevolent and malevolent. This division may have taken place under Buddhist influence at a considerably later period. It is quite certain, however, that malevolent influences—no doubt spiritual—made them-

[1] Doctrine of the Mean, xvi.

selves felt during the more ancient period, for we are told in the Analects that when the people were driving out noxious influences, probably with as much noise as they do to-day, Confucius always placed himself on the steps of his ancestral temple to reassure the spirits of his ancestors, in order that the noise might not alarm them. This may have been merely a quixotic method of acting towards his progenitors as he would have done had they been alive. At least it shows that the magical expulsion of noxious influences was in vogue in his day, and no doubt throughout the ages before him.

The vast number of the spirits that fill the land of China led to the development of a science, which arose out of the yin and yang idea, called Fêng-shui, that is, wind and water, or in other words natural philosophy. With the spirits controlling every part of the universe, and affected therefore by every act of man, it became necessary to do nothing which could disturb the unseen powers. Hence an elaborate system of geomancy and necromancy came into existence, possibly an outgrowth of primitive magic. The Fêng-shui elaboration, with its geomantic and necromantic additions, is of a late period, though, of course, it is attributed to that mystery book of the Chinese, the Yi Ching. Nothing of such a character is to be found in that book, though the pa-kua, on which it is supposed to be founded, has been credited with all the later developments of the yin-yang theory.

This dualistic system of the yin and the yang has, then, grown to be something more than a merely speculative theory as to the order of the universe. It has been elaborated into an applied science. The very simplicity of the theory renders it easy of apprehension by the multitude, but when it is brought into the realm of practice the multitudinous combinations which result demand the wisdom of the specialist. Consequently, an army of specialists exists

in China whose living depends upon their interpretation of the forces of nature, one might almost say upon the operations of the ghost world in nature. These men are drawn from all schools of thought, and from all ranks of life. The lordly Confucian scholar has been as firm a believer in the doctrine, and its development in fêng-shui or geomancy, as the most stupid Buddhist monk, or the Taoist spiritualistic medium.

Seeing that spirits exist everywhere, and take up their abode in anything, it is of vital importance that every new line of action should be taken only after the assurance that the spirits will not be disturbed. For the spirits have the power and the will to wreak vengeance on any disturber of their peace. Consequently, no man dares to dig up long-undisturbed ground to build a house, or even a pigsty, until he has appealed to the geomancer to know whether the fêng-shui will be disturbed. No grave can be built until the site has been carefully chosen in a position where the fêng-shui, or geomantic, conditions have been discussed, and shown to make for the repose of the soul of the deceased; otherwise the yin part of the deceased, being unable to find rest, might turn into a peculiarly truculent form of demon and bring woe upon the family; for the prosperity of a family is dependent not more upon the efforts of the living than upon the goodwill of the dead.

The result of this doctrine, therefore, is that myriads of coffins lie long unburied awaiting the choice of a suitable position for the grave. I once preached in a gentleman's house with a coffin behind me, which I thought to be empty. Only after the service was over did I discover that it had already been occupied six months, as no lucky site had yet been found, despite, possibly because of, the endeavours of numerous able professors of the science of fêng-shui. Wherever one goes in China, unburied coffins are seen,

some because of the poverty of the living, many through the intricacies of fêng-shui.

Sometimes when a family has suffered the buffets of fortune for a long period of years, and the geomancers advise that their ill-luck is due to the bad position chosen for a parent's grave, the bones of the deceased are exhumed, enclosed in an urn, and removed to a better site.

This doctrine of yin and yang, of fêng-shui, of good and evil spirits, chiefly evil, would make life intolerable were it not for the mild fatalism which has grown into the Chinese character. Some there are, both among the learned and the ignorant, who ignore the whole question and go their way unheeding. Others make life burdensome by their scrupulousness. There are men who will not take a journey until they have consulted one of the numerous fortune-tellers who sit in the open street ready to announce whether his yang is in the preponderance or his yin. For the professor of yin-yang decides the wisdom or unwisdom of every new procedure, whether it be a marriage engagement, the date of the wedding (in which the bride herself has no voice), the opening of a shop, the first shaving of a child's head, the growing of a moustache—everything. Not only is the professor consulted, but before action is taken, offerings are often made to some divinity or other for protection.

The dualistic doctrine is also carried into the moral world, for virtue is recognized as yang, while vice is yin. In consequence, the man who is full of virtue is also full of yang, and this yang influence going out from him is able to overcome every kind of yin, or evil, influence. There is so much of truth in the idea that dislike or dread of yin influences has been an aid to virtue in many. Moreover, the yang influence which a good man exerts is valuable to others and to the neighbourhood in which he lives. Confucius once remarked, though not in connexion with the

idea of yin-yang, that it is not wealth which makes a neighbourhood, but virtue. His later followers believe that a veritable yang air of virtue goes out from the good man to drive away the yin, or evil influences, which might otherwise work evil.

In this respect, then, the yin-yang theory of the cosmos has had a useful influence on Chinese life. Not that virtue has found its origin in any such theory. Virtue has come down through all ages in China from the noble-spirited men of old, who loved it for itself and for the greater beauty and power it added to this life as well as the promise it gave of that which is to come. But the doctrine, when removed from the philosopher's study and brought into the daily life of the people as an applied science, has placed a burden upon their shoulders which is beyond the strength of any people to bear. It has closed the avenues of national wealth. Mines could not be opened lest the spirits be disturbed and bring woe on the land. Railways could not be built for a like reason. Rivers and water-channels could not be straightened, nor new-fangled irrigation works started, though they would save whole populations from famine; nor could clock-towers or lofty buildings be erected, lest the fêng-shui be disturbed. On the other hand, pagodas dot the country all over, erected for the most part by devotees of yin-yang, in order properly to conserve the fêng-shui of the neighbourhood—an all too clear evidence that the yang element of virtue was not sufficiently active amongst the people to be trusted alone without the addition of the towering pagoda!

When I first read the following sentences from Dr. de Groot I marked them with approval. On further consideration, however, I find much to criticize. 'If missionaries in China', he says, 'wish to conquer idolatry, they will have to destroy the belief in demons first, together with the classical cosmological dogma of the Yang

and Yin, in which it is rooted, and which constitutes to this day Confucian truth and wisdom of the very highest kind. They will have to educate China in a correct knowledge of nature and its laws; China's conversion will require no less than a complete revolution in her culture, knowledge, and mode of thought, which have been tutored throughout all time by antiquity, and the classical books through which antiquity speaks.'[1]

On the question of education, I find myself in agreement with him, for I am firmly of opinion that it is no unimportant part of the duty of missions to help 'to educate China in a correct knowledge of nature and its laws'. But I do not hold that missionaries will have *first* to destroy the belief in demons. How a missionary is to take the New Testament to simple, uneducated Chinese and explain that the demons which Christ cast out never existed is not very manifest. Demonolatry and demonology are two distinct things, and 'the expulsive power of a new affection', the love of Christ, is strong enough to put an end to demonolatry, and to rid the Chinese mind of the slavish fear of demons. I say so unhesitatingly, having seen its effect in thousands of cases. Nor does the cosmological dogma of the Yang and Yin constitute to this day Confucian truth and wisdom of the very highest kind. That highest truth and wisdom are expressed in the opening words of the Great Learning, which treats on the aim and substance of education. Confucius there lays down that 'The object and aim of education is to elucidate lucid virtue, to renovate the people, and to stop at nothing short of the *summum bonum*'. Far from the Yin-yang combination being the highest truth and wisdom, it is not found once either in the Analects, the Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean, or Mencius. Nor, finally, do I think that China's conversion will require so complete a revolution in

[1] *The Religions of the Chinese*, p. 20.

her culture, knowledge, and mode of thought as Dr. de Groot demands. Christ came not to destroy but to fulfil, and there is a magnificent basis of divine truth upon which He can build in China. What is needed is builders, not destroyers. And the greatest of all offices and delights of the missionary is not to destroy the less beautiful, but to preach the more beautiful, the Christ, who satisfies the aspiration of the Chinese heart so fully that yin and yang and fêng-shui, and ghosts and demons become as nothing, as if they did not exist. Moreover, the true yang influence of Jesus Christ goes through the Christian into the lives of others, and is stronger and more effective than many pagodas.[1]

Since the above was in print I have met with Père Wieger's explanation of the Pa-kua and its use, which may be summarized thus: 'Eight trigrams form the base of the system. They are composed of whole and broken lines. No further mystery. All possible combinations of two elements in the trigrams, *voilà tout.*' Each of the hexagrams consists of two trigrams, the lower being taken first, the upper indicating the result, e. g. if, on divining, the hexagram 31 be obtained, it will be found that its lower trigram is a mountain, its upper one a lake (or body of water). A lake above a mountain indicates that the mountain has sunk in the waters and the prognostication is unfavourable. If, on the contrary, a mountain succeeds a lake it is favourable. This system, applied chiefly to the trigrams, is a simple one; others with the hexagrams are more complicated.—L. Wieger, *Histoire des croyances religieuses et des opinions philosophiques en Chine.*

[1] See Note, p. 263.

LECTURE VIII

THE SOUL, ANCESTOR-WORSHIP, AND THE FUTURE

In considering the question of the soul we must differentiate at the outset between the soul while in the body and the soul as disembodied. Some of the terms used apply to both, and are therefore of value as expressive of a belief in the continuance of the soul and its individuality.

There is one term which has given the title to an important and extensive library of psychology, namely, the term Hsing 性, and its meaning is nature or character, the nature especially of man. Though Confucius mentioned it on occasion, his recognized *métier* was that of a moral, not a mental, philosopher, consequently we find one of his principal disciples remarking that while they heard their master discourse on culture and refinement they did not hear him discuss the question of the hsing (the soul), or T'ien Tao (the course, or laws of Heaven). That is, he declined to be drawn away from his vocation of moral and political philosopher into the speculative realms of psychology or theology.

Nevertheless, he has not left us without evidence of his views, though, unlike some of his followers, especially those of the Sung period, who have written voluminous tomes on metaphysics, he has left us without any reasoned statement. We can therefore only infer his ideas from scattered sayings which have come down to us, and from his general attitude in regard to things pertaining to the soul.

In the Analects he only refers to the hsing once, when he utters a phrase which has become universally known

throughout the country, 'Hsing hsiang chin, hsi hsiang yüan,'—'In nature approximate, by practice remote,' and by this he is understood to mean that at birth the moral natures of men nearly resemble each other, but in practice they grow wide apart. Another version makes him imply that men are born good, but in practice they drift away. This doctrine of the innate goodness of man is definitely advocated by Mencius, in whose day a great discussion had arisen as to whether man is by nature good or evil, or neither, or both.

It is, however, in the Doctrine of the Mean that we have the most definite statement from Confucius. There we find him stating,—'That which has been ordained, or bestowed, by Heaven (upon man) is called his hsing (that is, his nature or soul); an accordance with this nature is called the Tao (or Right Way); and the regulation of this Way is called Chiao (that is, Instruction).' We have here the recognition of the spirit within man, of a Right Way which it should pursue, and the necessity of training it in that Way. He goes on to say, 'The Way may not be left for an instant. If it could be left it would not be the Way. Therefore, the wise man is cautious in regard to the invisible, and apprehensive in regard to the inaudible. For there is nothing more openly apparent than the secret, nor manifest than the minute. Hence, the wise man is watchful over himself, when in secret'—literally, 'guards his aloneness'.

Later, he says, 'It is only he who possesses perfect sincerity who can fully develop his hsing, or nature. Able fully to develop his own nature, he can do the same to the nature of other men. Able fully to develop the nature of other men, he can then do the same to other creatures. Able fully to develop the natures of other creatures, he can assist in Heaven's transforming and nourishing work. Able to do this, he is able to form a trinity with Heaven

and Earth.' Here we find stated that ternion of Powers, Heaven, Earth, and Man, which has become a leading article in the Chinese creed. It is not necessary to assume that Confucius means that man is equal to God, but that he forms one of the three great Powers through which divine operation takes place.

Later he goes on to say, 'It is sincerity whereby self-completion is effected. . . . Sincerity is the beginning and end of things, and without sincerity there would be nothing, therefore the wise man puts high value on sincerity. By sincerity he not only perfects himself, but others. The perfecting of the self implies virtue; the perfecting of others, wisdom. These two, virtue and wisdom, are the moral qualities of his hsing, or nature, embodying the Tao, or Right Way, on the one hand internally, and on the other externally.'

And finally, 'Only by perfect virtue can the perfect way be realized. Therefore the wise man does honour to his virtuous nature. He makes inquiry and study his pursuit, reaching out to the widest and greatest, as well as searching into the most ethereal and minute, striving after the heights and the light, yet pursuing the middle path.'

It will be clear to you from the above quotations that Confucius definitely states that man has a hsing, or spirit which has been divinely bestowed, that there is a divinely ordained course which he ought to pursue, that men need to be taught what this course is, and that the wise among men must in all sincerity search out this course, personally follow it, and by this process influence the mass of men to do the same. This is all very excellent, but men not unnaturally wish to know whither this Tao, or Way leads. Does it only apply to this life, or does the hsing, or soul have a continued existence after its disembodiment?

Now Confucius gave no definite answer to such questions as these. When one of his disciples asked him about his duty to the kuei-shên, or spirits, he received the noted reply, 'While still unable to do your duty to the living, how can you do your duty to the dead?' When the disciple ventured to ask further about death, he received the reply, 'Not yet understanding life, how can you understand death?'[1] And with this the disciple had to be content.

Again, on another occasion, when he was asked whether the dead had knowledge of the services of their offspring, he replied that, were it categorically declared that they had such knowledge, he feared that filial sons would utterly impoverish themselves by their filial offerings; whereas on the other hand, if it were said they had no knowledge, he feared that unfilial sons would become utterly irreligious.[2]

While, therefore, he refused to commit himself as to cognition by the dead of worship by the living, this by no means proves that he was even agnostic as to their continued existence. He was a very religious man, and both strictly conformed to and advocated stringent conformation to the services of the ancestral temple. There was nothing Machiavellian about him; consequently I can find no evidence to show that he advocated such services for political purposes only. Indeed, his whole conduct, as well as the sincerity in worship which he demanded, all indicate that though he made no dogmatic statement as to the continued existence of the human soul, he believed in it—indeed, one may say, took it for granted. To quote the Analects, he 'sacrificed to the spirits as if they were present', and he himself said, 'For me not personally to be present at a sacrifice is as if I did not sacrifice.'

We may, then, say that the attitude of Confucius, as of

[1] Analects, XI. xi.

[2] The Chia Yü, or Family Sayings.

his orthodox followers, to this day, is that the soul must be regarded as continuing to exist after its disembodiment, and that it is the duty of the living to show their affectionate respect by offering those things which pleased the departed while here, even though there be no certainty that the departed are really cognizant of those offerings.

There is clear evidence also that, from early times it was a tenet of the Chinese that the dead continued to take an interest in the affairs of the living. The ancient emperors always made formal announcements in sacrifice to their forefathers of any important step they proposed to take, and sought their approval, evidently believing that the departed heard and could show their approval or disapproval. This was the strength of divination, for in ancient times it seems to have been the will of the forefathers, or of Heaven through the forefathers, that was thus sought.

Idolatry, the deification of heroes and worthies, the multiplication of the gods which has occurred since the introduction of Buddhism, have carried divination entirely away from the ancestral into temples devoted to these later objects of worship.

I find two words, and two words only, used in the Confucian classics denoting the disembodied spirit. One of these is shên 神, the other is kuei 鬼. Other words have been employed since, such as hwun 云魂, ling 靈, ch'i 氣, p'oh 魄, and ming 明. But these words have resulted from later philosophizings. In the classics the word shên is employed to indicate both the nature-spirits and the disembodied spirit. In process of time it has also come to denote the embodied soul of man. As I have stated in a previous lecture, the word kuei, in the classics, indicates the daimon, or disembodied spirit, and in the Odes we find it also used once to denote an imp or sprite. In process of time it has come to mean a malevolent spirit. In early days we find the two terms united into one

expression, occasionally shên-kuei, but more often kuei-shên. I find no evidence to prove what Canon MacClatchie and now Dr. de Groot advocate, namely, that in ancient times philosophy had reached a sufficiently advanced stage to define each human soul as a dualism, consisting of both a kuei and a shên. Still less do I find that, in the pre-Confucian period, a division of the soul of man had been made into the tripartite and septempartite divisions into which later philosophical discussion divided it. There is nothing to show that the ancient Chinese believed in anything but a unity of spirit in each man, which remained a unity after his departure from this life.

Believing that the yin-yang or dualistic theory is not a primitive conception, but dates from the Chou period, I am of opinion that it was only then that a simpler form of the dualistic theory was applied to the human soul, in that some souls became shên and others kuei. It is at a still later period that we begin to find the individual soul considered as a duality, its yin part being represented by the kuei or anima, and its yang part by the shên or animus. The kuei in this development represents the animal soul, the passions or lower part of the nature, and the shên represents the higher part of the organism.

Two other terms were introduced during this later period to represent the kuei and shên divisions, or complements of the soul, namely, p'oh or anima, and hwun or animus. It was not until well into our own era that the hwun was further subdivided into three and the p'oh into seven parts. These may have been crude psychological differentiation of functions in the one soul, rather than a distinctive separation of the soul into so many separate entities having independent existences, as some would imply. Nevertheless, the idea has filtered down amongst the people, and while it is unnecessary to assume that any intention to split the soul up into ten parts existed at the outset, it has

so resulted in popular conception. In essence, however, a duality is maintained, namely, the hwun, the animus, or intelligent soul, and the p'oh, the anima, or sensual part. As to the p'oh, if the deceased be properly buried, it returns to the earth or grosser element from which it sprang, and apparently ceases to exist, but if the deceased be improperly buried, or his burial too long delayed, the p'oh becomes a very dangerous and malignant demon, capable of any crime. Such demons and the spirits of were-animals and were-birds and things, as for instance were-wolves, were-foxes, were-tigers, and so on, take possession of human beings and at times produce terrible epidemics of demon-possession, during which many people die. Modern pathologists would probably diagnose the epidemic as a form of hysteria, but the Chinese prefer to 'believe the evidence of their own eyes and ears', and the demons are very real to them. If conversion to Christianity must await the destruction of the belief in demon-possession amongst the Chinese, it will have to wait a long time.

As to the shên part of the soul, that is, the animus, the intellectual, moral, and spiritual, this is now known by the name of the hwun, or ling-hwun. The word hwun is composed of 'yün', vapour, and 'kuei', a daimon, or disembodied spirit. Possibly the 'yün' part is merely phonetic, though more likely it has a relationship to the meaning of the word, implying the ethereal spirit. The word 'ling' is composed of rain-drops and a wizard, and means clever, intelligent. It may have some original connexion with rain-making. The two characters used together, ling-hwun, form the term now used by missionaries for the soul. There is still another term used by the Chinese to denote this animus, or higher part of the soul. It is the character 'ming', bright, implying that the part of the human soul which has been freed from the yin, or grosser nature, and become etherealized, has ascended into the region of the yang, or

into the light. This term 'ming' is also employed along with shên, in shên-ming, to denote the divine spirits as distinguished from demons.

Now, whatever superstitious or incorrect ideas the Chinese may have in regard to the three souls and the seven p'oh, I think you will see that we have much excellent material to our hand in this recognition that the man who gives himself up to his sensual nature develops his kuei part at the expense of his shên or better part; but that, on the other hand, the human soul may become master of its grosser passions by the cultivation of the shên or higher nature, enter into a world of brightness here and become a 'bright spirit' in another sphere of existence. Those who wish to know in what depths of superstition a people may wallow should read the valuable and voluminous collection of instances so laboriously gathered by Dr. de Groot. While I think he has allowed the gross darkness of superstition, which no one can minimize, to bedim his vision of the beauty that undoubtedly exists in the writings of the best men of China, as also in the lives of many of her living sons and daughters, I have nothing but admiration for the service he has rendered to all missionaries and students of anthropology.

Summing up, then, the idea of the soul as found in the orthodox, or Confucian, school, we may say that, while there are some who are probably infected by Buddhist ideas of its extinction, there exists a general acceptance of the soul's continued existence, but that a theoretical state of agnosticism prevails in regard to its cognizance after death of mundane affairs. Such agnosticism, or rather reticence, is encouraged by Confucius, who nevertheless did—as his followers do to this day—make his offerings to his ancestors partly out of filial regard, and partly out of a feeling that the dead may have knowledge, and may bless and protect—or perhaps the opposite. This is the

philosophical attitude. Needless to say, the mass of the people are untroubled by doubts.

Turning now to the Taoist school—the very essence of the Taoistic cult, almost from its inception, is the search after immortality. It is a school which, after the palmy philosophical days of Chuang-tzŭ, has dwelt in a perfect fairy and imp land of unhampered fancy. Its demons and genii are legion. The Taoist votary is the spiritualist of China. Witchcraft and wizardry, spirit-possession and demon-expulsion, are the very breath of life to him, his veritable living. The terrible Boxer outbreak saw him in his glory. What could the foreigners' bullets do against the spiritualized switch of horsehair which he waved to and fro, as he faced modern rifles? Chinese soldiers sent out against him dared not fire upon him, lest the spirits which aided him should turn back the bullets and slay the rash marksmen. Were not the millions of miniature soldiers, cut out of paper by the women, immediately transformed into real spiritual Boxer soldiers?

Not only do the Taoists believe that the soul may live after the death of the body, but from the earliest times they have believed in deathlessness or translation, that both body and soul may be translated to the realms of the immortals. Like Enoch and Moses they may depart and never be seen again, or like Elijah they may be taken up in a chariot of light. Some of them seem to suggest that the soul will be absorbed in the ultimate ether, lost in the Absolute, like water returning to the ocean. But such is not the general conception, for we find the immortals clearly represented in pictorial form as alive, old, bearded men, and gentle-faced women, dressed in the ancient Chinese garb, perhaps playing a game of chess, or some other pleasant pursuit of the immortals.

There is no need to pursue this subject at length. Suffice it that for two thousand and more years the Taoist

has been searching for the elixir of immortality. Some are said to have found the magic herbs of which it is composed, and, after partaking, to have been translated to the regions of the blest. Several emperors have suddenly ended their reign after partaking of these potions. Whether the search is still going on, I know not. But the instinctive cry of the human heart, and I believe the divine cry, has never been absent from the Taoist heart. Such a craving we may rejoice in, for in communion with the living Christ the heart of the Taoist can find the same satisfaction which we find there. I refuse to think lightly even of the pitiable puerility of their ideas and methods. It is pitiable, let that suffice—it is the child mind, still wondering and wandering amongst the uncleared forests of nature, with all the wonder, alarm, and yet delight of the umbrageous forest.

As to the Buddhist school, it came to China in the Mahāyāna form, or at least it is that form which found acceptance in the country. Hīnayāna ideas of the cessation of the soul's existence after untold periods of transmigration have found advocates in China, and the wonderful intricacies of transmigration into animals and other living entities have undoubtedly had an influence on Chinese life. But the Mahāyāna school of Buddhism has adopted the belief in a continued personal existence, and that such continued existence is dependent, as to the form it takes, upon human conduct in this life. It is with the introduction of Buddhism, or at any rate associated with it at an early period, that the next world becomes separated into the two states of heaven and hell. This division of the two states has seized upon the Chinese mind. What was its first source we have not sufficient evidence to decide. It may have come from farther west than India. At any rate the Chinese outside Buddhism have adopted the idea, and in most, if not every one, of the cities, in the temple to 'the

God of the Eastern Peak' we find representations of heaven and hell embodying an idea unknown in the country before its foreign importation.

These representations are of a very vivid type, especially those depicting hell, for neither Chinese nor European art has ever risen to the possibilities of heaven as it has descended to the horrors of hell. Few would be attracted by the banalities of the Chinese artist's heaven, though they might be driven there from fear of the gruesome tortures of the nether regions as depicted by him. There, men represented by life-like models are sawn asunder by horrible-looking devils, they are pounded to a jelly in mortars, women are plunged into lakes of blood, and—well, I will not drive you into heaven by picturing a Chinese hell. Each torment is suited to the victim's crimes, and in some cases the particular organ guilty of the crime is vividly portrayed in process of excruciating purgation. Perhaps it is a pity that our Christian forefathers did not portray in marble, or, like the Chinese, in more perishable clay, the tortures they conjured up hardly less forcefully with their lips. Had they done so, the sight might have melted their hearts and humanized their doctrines at an earlier period.

This foreign importation of a heaven and a hell became more at home in China through the dualistic doctrine of yin and yang, and therefore easily became a part of the national belief. I do not think that it was adopted for political purposes, but no doubt it has been considered of deterrent value by the official mind. Indeed, the bare idea of future rewards and punishments grew into a thoroughly developed system. A visit to the temple of a 'city god' will show you that the next life is officially conceived of as centring around just such an official yamen as heretofore has administered its tainted justice in every city of China. There are the chief judge, assistant judges, police, lictors,

torturers, all complete—but, of course, the spiritual underlings are more horribly gruesome.

The point I wish to emphasize, however, is this—that whilst we are told of one soul which accompanies the body to the grave, another for the ancestral tablet, and a third for the other world, in the temple representations of the continued life, all notion of three hwun and seven p'oh are conspicuous by their absence. The individual soul is there, represented, it is true, with a body, but there he or she is, in one or the other suprā- or subter-mundane localities. So that we have the official recognition of personal continuity of the unity of the soul, and of sin, righteousness, and a judgement to come. Consequently, whatever agnosticism we may find amongst the Confucianists, or whatever views of nirvana the philosophic Buddhist may hold, here is the orthodox official view of the Chinese as expressed in non-Buddhist temples officially built.

I have associated the above ideas with Buddhism, because it is reasonable to believe that foreign though they are to ancient Chinese notions, they are not the outgrowth of the yin-yang doctrine, but imported from the West during the period of Buddhist invasion. How they came into Buddhism yet awaits inquiry. Certain it is that, while preaching the doctrine of transmigration of souls into the animal world, a doctrine which, with its natural corollary of abstention from the slaughter of animals, has influenced but never dominated the practical native mind, the Mahāyāna school has definitely preached the continuity of the soul, either in heaven or in hell. As I have shown, it has also adopted as an important part of its practice the salvation of the soul to heaven by good practices and devotional observances, especially in connexion with the cult of Kuanyin, the Buddhist form of Mariolatry, or the unwearying call upon Amitābha. And a very important part of the income of the Buddhist priest, cleric and lay, is

derived from the magical release of souls from hell. In this greed for souls—and money—the Taoist and he are both rivals and comrades. Both claim to possess the keys of heaven and hell, if not in so many words, yet in effect, for both claim the power, if sufficiently paid, to open the door of hell and release the departed parent from the agonies which he is, may be deservedly, undergoing.

For the purposes of the missionary, then, we may say that when he preaches to the Chinese that the doctrine of cause and effect is not limited to the present visible world, he will find the ground has been well prepared for him. What he will be able to do is to purify the gross imagination of the native mind, in the same way that we in this country have had, during the lifetime of some of us, to purify our own ideas by exchanging the material fires and the material worm, for something not less real or acute.

We now come to a much more delicate part of our subject in the consideration of Ancestor Worship. If there is one non-Christian, and, as some assert, anti-Christian doctrine which demands sympathetic and generous treatment, this is the one. The cult of the ancestor is a very ancient cult, not only in China, but in Western countries. In China its roots are sunk deep down in the national soul and stretch away back, one might almost say, to the death of the first Chinese parent. May it not indeed be probable that the cult of the ancestor is the earliest form, if not of religion, at least of spiritual development; in other words, that God brought men to life and Himself through death, the death of the parent, the mother may be, to whom even the savage is united by the strange tie of body and soul, the mystic relationship of parent and child.

The cult of the ancestor, then, is the essential religion of China. Little sense of loss is experienced by the excision of all else. Real atheism in China is the refusal to worship at the ancestral shrine. Nearly everything

else may be forgone and forgiven, but this never. You will see, then, how important it is to deal generously with a doctrine which, though it may often pass through a sordid stratum of selfishness, has its roots deeper down in filial affection. I have known a Chinese colporteur, trained in the old school, preach that all the ancestors of his congregation were in hell because they had not believed in Jesus Christ. Even if true, it was not the most tactful way of putting it. And the really filial son would not hesitate to go after his fathers and suffer with them. So no wonder a deputation of Christians waited on me to ask that I would use my influence to prevent this man from again visiting their district.

Filial piety, extending beyond the grave, is the cord of four hundred million strands which binds the nation, the clan, and the family together. Is it necessary to sever this powerful bond? And if so, who is to do it? There are missionaries who will hear of no toleration of any kind. There are others who would tolerate it, with or without modification. After all, it is not the foreigner who will settle the matter. The Chinese will do that for themselves.

In its original form it is already dead, for the needs of the living forbid the pre-Confucian and Confucian demand that the son should spend three years in ragged, half-starved dishevelment by the graveside of his parent, a custom probably the outcome of the days when the corpse was not buried, but exposed uncoffined on the hill-side, and when a sorrowing son guarded the father or mother he had loved against wild animals. The severity of the three years' mourning has for long been reduced to a suitable interment, to the wearing of mourning for a nominal 'three years', and to the proper sacrifices. The advancement of education will still further lighten the weight of the dead hand, at any rate, in the form in which it has pressed in the past. Already many Chinese of modern education, and

Christian Chinese as a whole, are more opposed to the burden of the ancestor than are many missionaries, and we can afford to leave it to them to settle the question.

What then is the origin of this, the real religion of China? The answer to this question lies beyond the region of proof. All we do know is that it is introduced to our notice very early in the pages of recorded history. When the first historic emperor, Yao, decided to resign the throne to his successor Shun, he announced the succession to his deceased predecessors, i. e. either his own progenitors, or the previous occupants of the throne. After the accession of Shun, amongst those whom he appointed to various offices is the name of one whose duty was to arrange the tsung, or ancestral temple. This is the first instance of a temple being mentioned in the History. Other places of worship there were, but they seem to have been open altars to Shang Ti or to nature-spirits. It must be borne in mind that in those early days there was, as yet, neither hero-worship, nor sage-worship, nor the mass of idolatry with which China is now burdened. We may say, indeed, that the myriads of temples now found in China, devoted to all kinds of tutelary deities, originated almost as much in the ancestral temple as in Buddhism. I refer to the covered temples, not to the open altars, which there is no reason to doubt had precedence in time.

In this connexion I should like to refer to one character, Ti, 禘, the meaning of which is in doubt. The character is composed of two parts, one associated with divine indications and divine things in general, the other half being Ti or ruler, the same that is used in Shang Ti. The character denotes a sacrifice offered by the ancient emperors once in five years only, and, after the most careful preparation, to the primal ancestor, but whether of the reigning dynasty, or of the race, is not clear. Confucius considered the meaning of this sacrifice to be of the

profoundest. With this I must leave the matter, for whether primitive man first was drawn to worship through the spiritualized forces of nature or through the disembodied human spirit, or rather the disembodiment of the human spirit, we have nothing in China to prove.

From the days of Shun onwards we find the ancestral temple and worship increasingly referred to, that is, the imperial ancestral temple and worship. With it are associated music, dancing (or posturing), and divination. This has now entirely given way, amongst the people at any rate, to the simple and reverent offering of food by the chief of the clan, or the head of the household, the offerings being partaken of afterwards by the members of the clan or household. Clan temples to ancestors are found wherever clans prevail. These are most common in villages, and a village often consists of members of one clan, all of the same surname. In such a village we find a principal temple, in which the chief place is given to the pair of ancestors who founded the clan in that locality. Other subsidiary temples are also erected by various prosperous branches of the clan to their respective founders. A careful register is kept of every member of the clan, so that each can trace back his genealogy, not only to the first local founder, but to much earlier connexions in an earlier settlement. In the presence of a coolie of the K'ung, the Tsêng, or the Chang clans, the boast that one's ancestors led their men to battle in the fourteenth century, or 'came over with the Conqueror', is comparatively puerile. As to the tablets of the ordinary family, those of the three preceding generations are generally kept in the house of the senior member, for the family limits its attentions to the three preceding generations.

The clan temples, as a rule, are generally sufficiently endowed with lands, which are cultivated in turn by each division, subdivision, or family. The proceeds are applied

to the provision of the regulation sacrifices. Any surplus becomes the property of the member or members upon whom has fallen the responsibility of making such provision. One interesting feature of these endowments is the encouragement they usually give to education, for to each member of the clan who obtains a degree a liberal annual bursary is given, either for a number of years, or for life.

I have had the rare, if not unique, experience of renting many of these ancestral temples as places of Christian worship. It has been part of my policy to impress upon the people that, while Christians cannot make material offerings to the dead, yet there is nothing in Christianity inimical to that reverence for and love towards the progenitors who have done so much for their offspring, which are the loftier, the more spiritual, characteristic of ancestor worship. Are not the forefathers the forefathers of Christian Chinese as well as of the non-Christian, and do not the Christian Chinese recognize their indebtedness to their progenitors, and possess as sincere a love for them as their non-Christian brethren? But because the forefathers are now spirits it is the attitude of the heart that they will value, and not the perishing material food which is offered, and which they can no longer enjoy. Sympathy and persuasion are more powerful weapons for the missionary than satire or pugnacity.

There is much to deplore in the worship of the dead. It has generated no little superstition, which has become an oppressive burden upon the living, and has drawn the mind of the Chinese away from the search after and approach to the Great Parent of all men. But there is also much to admire and preserve. The mode will be changed. The spirit need not perish.

LECTURE IX

MORAL IDEALS

Moral ideals and spiritual vision as exhibited in the aristocracy of character constitute the best standard for measuring the vitality of a people. They may be described as the pulse-measurer of a nation's life, registering the vital pressure in the body politic. As with the physical organism, so with the political, when moral and spiritual conditions are low, the nerve force of a people suffers accordingly, and though the body politic may continue to exist, even for generations, it is in a devitalized state, flaccid, torpid, semi-comatose.

Such has been the case with China. For nearly a millennium she had no moral and spiritual renascence, and lived in the depressing atmosphere of a false and enervating natural philosophy. A torpor settled down upon her, and consequently there was neither effort to raise the moral standard, nor a vision of the glory of life here and hereafter.

The renascence has now occurred. It has been brought about by agencies either directly Christian or allied with Christian forces, for apart from Christ none of the older nations is now ever stirred from its lethargy to newness of life. In Him alone is the vital force of the new birth, both to men and nations. Fertilized by the vitality of Christian ideals, China is at present enduring the pangs of travail. The new life which is being born will bring a new contribution to the race. This contribution will not be altogether independent of the past, for a new birth is never a new

creation. It takes its form and even its spirit from its progenitors. The renascence in China will consequently be neither entirely European nor wholly Asian, but a blend of both, with a distinctive quality of its own.

It is not of the future, however, that I wish to speak, but of the past. Since the beginning of authentic Chinese history, morals have been conspicuously recognized as the duty of man and the basis of well-being, both in the State, the family, and the individual. The universal value of moral character is admirably recognized by Confucius when he says that the truly virtuous man may dwell respected amongst savage tribes, and even transform them.

It must not be thought, however, that morals sprang Minerva-like from the head of Jupiter. The pages of history clearly prove that there has been growth. The same processes which have produced advancement in moral conceptions and application in the West have also been at work in China. The increasing complexity of the relations brought about by the growth of society, and by the change from a nomad to an agricultural and settled life, involve growth in moral ideas. Morals which were conditioned by a state in which raw flesh was devoured, when promiscuity prevailed amongst the sexes, and when children knew their mothers but not their fathers, could not endure when people settled in communities, and as these communities grew, their complications demanded a growing adjustment. A state of morals existed long into historic times which was much lower than is prevalent to-day. Man's inhumanity to man has not ceased even yet, but it was all too evident in ancient times. Living persons were buried with the dead, judicial punishments were of a barbarous character, and, as appears probable, human sacrifices were offered. The religious devotion of human lives was against the conscience of China before it was

against the conscience of the West. Straw dogs came to be used in funeral rites instead of human beings. Personators of the dead at funeral ceremonies received the offerings to the dead, and continued to live, instead of being buried, as was the case in earlier times. Even down to the Confucian period, relics of the old barbaric code remained. For instance, when the brother of one of his disciples died, the widow and major-domo proposed that attendants should be buried to accompany him. The disciple agreed, by naïvely suggesting that of course the best attendants would be the widow and the major-domo, after which the matter was not pressed.

As to judicial barbarity, while inhuman tortures and the mutilation of criminals undergoing the extreme penalty have not yet ceased, the mutilation of ordinary criminals did so before it ceased in Europe. It may hardly be necessary to do so, but I draw your attention to these points in passing to show that morals have grown in China as elsewhere.

It is to Fu-hsi, the legendary founder of the Chinese nation, who is generally placed in the twenty-ninth century B.C., that the establishment of public morals is attributed. As already mentioned, the institution of marriage, the invention of writing, the creation of the first musical instruments (stringed instruments), and the introduction of cooking flesh are credited to him. Writing and cooking may be self-evident as conditions of moral progress, but that music should be so considered amongst a people generally, though wrongly, considered to be as unmusical as the Chinese, may not be clear; yet Confucius in a later age, like Plato, considered the right kind of music to be a powerful aid to morals, and long before his day there was the division into sacred and secular music.

It is not until the age of Yao and Shun in the twenty-fourth and twenty-third centuries B.C. that we reach the

historical period. In the meagre records of Yao we find it said of him that he was 'reverent, wise, cultured, thoughtful; always calm; and withal sincerely courteous and modest. His light shone to the four corners of the empire, extending from the highest to the lowest.'[1] A great flood, of long duration, overspread the empire and he sought for a man who could control it. His minister recommended that this important duty and honour be conferred on the emperor's eldest son. 'Alas,' said the Emperor, 'he is untrustworthy and quarrelsome:—can he do?' So another man was appointed. Later, after he had reigned seventy years, he sought a successor, and asked his Court to recommend a man without consideration of station, whether high or low, rich or poor. All recommended a man called Shun, and on inquiring as to his character was told by his chief minister: 'He is the son of a blind man. His father was of a warped character, his stepmother not to be trusted, and (his half-brother) Hsiang overbearing, but he was able to bring about a state of harmony by his filial conduct, and gradually to bring them to order their lives so that they did not pursue their evil courses.' The Emperor said: 'I will try him. I will wive him, and watch his behaviour with (my) two daughters.' Thereupon he sent his two daughters to Shun's abode, north of the river Kwei, instructing them to be respectful. Whether his two daughters were too difficult for the old ruler, and he thought that if Shun could control them he would find the empire as easy to control as a turn of the hand, the chronicle does not declare. At any rate, Shun proved acceptable, and later he succeeded to the throne.

The Canon of Shun opens with a description of his character, wherein he is depicted, like his predecessor,

[1] This and most of the following quotations are from the Shu Ching, the ancient Book of History.

as profound, discerning, cultured and wise, mild, respectful, and entirely sincere; his virtue shone out of his obscurity, ascended to and was heard of by the king, who willed that he should occupy the throne. The first statement which is made about him after his accession is, that he devoted himself to setting forth in excellence the five cardinal duties of humanity, and that these five duties came to be universally observed. They are said to be the virtues belonging to the five social relations of husband and wife, father and son, sovereign and subject, elder and younger brother, friend and friend. These five are to this day the Wu Lun, or Five Human Relationships, just as kindness, justice, reverence, wisdom, and good faith came to be the Wu Ch'ang, i. e. Five Constants, or fundamentals of Virtue.

It is also recorded of him that he codified the laws, enacting banishment as a mitigation of the five mutilations. These five mutilations were branding, cutting off the nose, cutting off the feet, castration, and execution in various forms. Nevertheless, some if not all of them apparently still existed in the days of Confucius, nearly two thousand years after. Be this as it may, Shun left an example of humanity, which became an ideal of the nation and which did not utterly fail of realization. Shun further modified the harshness of the laws by substituting the whip and the rod, and by the redemption of certain crimes by fines. Unintentional and accidental offences were to be pardoned, but crimes with intention were to be severely dealt with. 'Let me be regardful; let me be regardful,' he is said to have remarked; 'let punishment be compassionate.' Here again we have a great and humane principle laid down, which has had its value in Chinese life. Even we are only beginning to proceed a step farther and say, 'Let punishment be remedial'.

Again, when he appointed the officer who was to attend

to the three divisions of the sacrifices, those to the spirits of heaven, earth, and departed men, he impressed upon him the importance of reverence and of moral character, saying, 'Morning and night be respectful. Be upright. Be pure.' And when he appointed the director of music, he did so 'to teach our sons, so that they may be straight and yet gentle, magnanimous yet dignified, strong yet not harsh, decided yet not overbearing. Poetry is the mind in words, song is the flowing of the words, the sounds accord with the flow, the pipes give harmony to the sounds, the eight notes (or instruments) are thus able to blend, none detracting from the other, and the spirits and men are brought into accord.' After appointing all his various officers he said to them, 'Ah, you twenty and two men, respect (my orders), and thus assist in the service of Heaven'.

The next emperor was the great Yü, China's first engineer, who diked the rivers and restrained the famous flood of China. He it was who broke away from the tradition by which he had been raised to the throne, namely, that the best man in the country, without regard to descent, should be chosen as its occupant. By the appointment of his son as successor he established the principle of the hereditary monarchy, a principle of debatable value—in China. At any rate it has lately been debated there at the sword-point, and the argument has gone against it.

Before his accession he surveyed and arranged the divisions of the empire, and, on the invitation of the Emperor Shun, gave expression to his views as follows: 'If the sovereign can realize the arduous responsibility of his sovereignty, and each minister of his ministry, government will be well ordered, and the people be sedulous after virtue.' Herein is found that important principle which forms one of the main ideas in Confucian ethics,

namely, that the ruler should be the *fons et origo* of virtue. From him all virtue should proceed. A highly virtuous ruler conditions a highly virtuous people. A degenerate ruler conditions a degenerate people. There *is* a power for virtue or vice not only in the throne of China, but elsewhere. This was the doctrine of the Chinese from the earliest imperial times down to Confucius, who adopted, advocated, and temporarily failed by it. Yet it is only partially true, and if relied upon solely, becomes utterly untrue, or at least fails to stand the test. Nevertheless, no one can deny that a virtuous Court, a vicious one also, has a far-reaching moral influence on the national life.

Later, speaking of good and bad fortune, Yü says, 'It is accordance with the path of right which brings good fortune; it is going against it which brings ill fortune—like the shadow or the echo'. And later, when Shun calls him to the throne, Shun speaks *inter alia* in these words: 'I see how great is your virtue, how admirable your vast achievements. The lot of Heaven falls on your person, and you must at length ascend to the imperial office. The heart of man is unstable, its affinity for the right way is small. Be discriminate. Be single-hearted, that you may sincerely hold to the (golden) mean.'

As showing the value placed upon virtue I may once more quote the advice of Yü's chief minister: 'It is virtue which moves Heaven. There is no distance to which it will not reach. Pride brings loss. Humility receives increase. This is the Way of Heaven.'

On another occasion one of his ministers spoke of nine virtues discoverable in conduct, explaining that when we say a man possesses virtue we mean that he does such and such things. The nine virtues are, 'To be magnanimous yet inspiring respect, gentle yet firm, honestly outspoken yet respectful, commanding yet respectful, pacific yet bold, straight yet agreeable, generous yet

discriminating, resolute yet guarded, valiant yet just.' These are the virtues which make the good officer.

It will be seen that while there is as yet no complete definition of virtue during this early period, we do find that it is the office of the ruler to be its exemplar, and that virtue is considered the very base on which the throne rests. This is still further exemplified towards the end of the first dynasty when King Chieh, its last wicked representative, had turned the Court into a bacchanalian pandemonium.

It is said of T'ang, who ultimately drove Chieh from the throne, that he inscribed on his bath-tub: 'Daily renew thyself, daily renew thyself, day by day renew thyself.' If it was a real bath-tub and not merely a wash-bowl it is pleasant to lay stress on the good example of cleanliness set by him. What is more to our point is the recognition in this early age of the value of a daily moral cleansing. It is a priceless heritage to a people that such an ideal should be placed before them, and handed down through all these four thousand years. When T'ang, himself of royal descent, expressed a feeling of remorse over his conduct in expelling the Hsia sovereign, Chieh, from the throne, and feared that future generations would 'fill their mouths' with him as a usurper and a destroyer of the divine line of Yü, his minister reminded him that 'the sovereign of Hsia had fallen because his virtue had become all-obscured, and the people were as if they had fallen into mire and grime. Heaven thereupon gifted (you) the king with valour and wisdom, to serve as an exemplar and director to the myriad states and to continue the old ways of Yü. . . . Our king's virtues became a theme eagerly listened to. He did not approach to dissolute music and women. . . . Order your affairs by righteousness, and your heart by religion—so shall you transmit a grand example to posterity.'

T'ang himself in his announcement says, 'The Imperial Ruler Above (Shang Ti) has conferred upon the lower people a moral sense, so that they may maintain their proper nature.' At his death his chief minister placed T'ang's son on the throne, and in his address again laid stress on virtue as alone giving the divine right to its possession. 'Now, your Majesty,' he said, 'is entering on the inheritance of your father's virtue, and everything depends on how you commence your reign. To establish love, it is your place to love your elders; to set up respect, it is your place to respect your relatives. The commencement is in your family and State; the consummation is in the empire at large.' In conclusion he says, 'The way of God is not unchangeable—on the good-doer He sends down all blessings, and on the evil-doer He sends down all woes. Do you but be virtuous, and even though your achievements be small, the myriad regions will be in felicity. If you be not virtuous, though your achievements be great, you will ruin your ancestral temple.'

Despite frequent admonitions, the young king fell into self-indulgence, whereupon the minister finally declared, 'This is real unrighteousness, and is becoming by practice his nature. I will not associate with one so disobedient.' Therefore, he removed him to his father's grave for a period, which led him to become sincerely virtuous. Then he restored him, on which it is recorded that the young ruler bowed his face to the ground and said, 'I, the little child, did not understand virtue, and was making myself one of the unworthy. By my desires I was setting at naught all right rules, and by self-indulgence was violating religion, and speedy ruin must soon have fallen upon me. Calamities formed by Heaven may be avoided, but from calamities of one's own making there is no escape.'

In another place his minister says to him, 'If the king's virtue be unfailing, he will preserve his throne; if otherwise, the nine provinces will be lost to him. The king of Hsia could not maintain virtue, but contemned the spirits and oppressed the people. Imperial Heaven withdrew its protection, and surveyed the myriad regions to find one who might receive its favour, fondly seeking a man of single i. e. unalloyed virtue, whom it might make lord of the spirits (or spiritual lord). There were I-yin and T'ang, both possessed of single virtue, and able to satisfy the mind of Heaven. T'ang received the bright favour of Heaven, and became master of the multitudes of the nine provinces. . . . It was not that Heaven had any partiality for T'ang himself—Heaven simply gave its favour to single virtue. Nor was it that T'ang sought the allegiance of the people—the people simply turned to single virtue. Where virtue is single, every action is fortunate. Where virtue is double or treble (i. e. impure), every action is unfortunate. Good and evil do not wrongly befall men, for Heaven sends down woe or weal according to their virtue.'

Again: 'Virtue has no unchanging preceptor, a supreme regard for the good is the preceptor; nor has the good an unvarying master (? principle), it is associated with single-mindedness.' I will close my reference to this dynasty by quoting a clause from an address to one of its later rulers, where it is said: 'In surveying men below, Heaven's first consideration is of their righteousness, and it bestows on them accordingly length of years or the contrary. It is not Heaven which cuts short men's lives; they themselves bring them to an end in the midst.'

I think you will see from the above that the ancient Chinese were a religious people with a clear recognition of the value of virtue. We shall find the same spirit continued in the succeeding dynasty; indeed in theory, and not a little in practice, virtue is the blood in the veins

of the Chinese nation which, however poor the circulation, has kept it alive.

Turning, then, to the records of the Chou dynasty, the dynasty made famous by Confucius and his contemporaries, we find that it stretched from 1122 to 255 B.C. Its predecessor, the Shang dynasty, had continued for some 650 years after the Hsia, but like it came to an end through the profligacy of its last ruler, Chou, or Shou. Virtue is a hardy plant, which finds the atmosphere of a luxurious Court retard its growth. It was during the reign of Shou, the Nero of China, that Duke Wên was imprisoned, and to wile away the dull hours refashioned the pa-kua, on which the classical Book of Changes is founded. At last Duke Wên could no longer resist the cry of the people and raised the successful standard of revolt. His death threw the leadership upon his son, who became King Wu, and I cannot do better than quote a few lines from his Great Declaration. In that he says:

'Heaven and earth are the father-mother of all creatures, and of all creatures men are the most intelligent. The sincere, wise, and understanding among them becomes the great sovereign, and the great sovereign is the father-mother of the people. But now, Shou, the king of Shang, does not reverence Heaven above, and inflicts calamities on the people below. He is abandoned to drunkenness, and reckless in lust. He has dared to exercise cruel oppression. Along with transgressors he has punished all their relatives. He has put men into office on the hereditary principle. He has made it his pursuit to have palaces, towers, pavilions, terraces, lakes, and all other extravagances, to the most painful injury of you, the myriad people. He has burned and roasted the loyal and good, and ripped up pregnant women. Great Heaven was moved with indignation, and charged my deceased father Wên reverently to display Its majesty; but he died

before the work was accomplished. . . . Shou has no repentant heart. He abides squatting on his heels, not serving God or the spirits of heaven and earth, neglecting also the temple of his ancestors, and not sacrificing in it.... Heaven, to protect the common people, made for them rulers, and made for them instructors, that they might be able to aid God, and secure the tranquillity of the empire.... I now lead the multitude of you to execute the punishment appointed by Heaven. Heaven compassionates the people. What the people desire, Heaven will be found to give effect to. Do you aid me, the one man, to cleanse for ever all within the four seas. Now is the time —it may not be lost.'

There is much more of this character, showing clearly that religion and morals were considered the twin bond which held the social fabric together, and that the sovereign rules in virtue only of the divine right of his virtue. But I have only time to refer to one more of the great founders of this dynasty before proceeding to Confucius, the 'uncrowned king' of China. King Wu had a brother Duke Wên, a man of noble mould, and the beau-ideal of Confucius, who in old age felt that inspiration had been withdrawn from him, inasmuch as he had not dreamed of the Duke for a long while.

King Wu reigned but seven years. You will remember that once during that period he lay at the point of death, and that Duke Wên, his brother, nobly went to the ancestral temple, and begged his ancestors to bring influence to bear that he might be taken rather than his royal brother, representing that he himself had qualities which excellently adapted him for the service of the spirits, while his brother was better suited to occupy the throne. His request to die was not granted, his brother being permitted to reign for some time longer.

On the king's death Duke Wên became regent, and

nobly filled that office. He brought the empire into good order, and especially devoted himself to the moral development of the young king and of the people. A very interesting temperance address exists accredited to him, in which he shows that it is drink which ruined the two previous dynasties, and in which he lays down the death penalty in case of persistent and wilful drunkenness.

I have quoted somewhat more extensively than I intended from pre-Confucian records, but it seemed to me important for you to apprehend that, however great Confucius may have been, his own description of himself is correct, when he states that he is 'a transmitter and not a creator'. It would be easy to multiply quotations from the older classics to show that 'virtue and righteousness—these are the great lessons', and that the great work of Confucius was to pass the religious and moral ideas of his predecessors through the winnowing fan of his own mind, only preserving such ideas as approved themselves to him. That he himself created anything we may dismiss, except it be a new presentation of ideals already in existence. Nevertheless, this is no small work, and was most necessary. He simplified the religious ceremonies and made them the standard for the nation; he stood as a barrier against increasing superstition, and has done more for moral development than any other teacher of the Chinese nation. All this is so evident that none will dispute his greatness, or deny that he is China's noblest son.

Let us now, then, turn to the Four Books, in order to discern what are the moral and spiritual ideas to which Confucius and his immediate disciples gave expression, and which have been the standard for the whole nation ever since.

There are three books from which we are able to obtain a clear insight into the character and teachings

of Confucius. These are the Analects, a book compiled after his death, containing his sayings or dialogues; the Great Learning, the text of which is said to have been composed by Confucius himself to show the aim of education; and the Doctrine of the Mean, being the teaching of Confucius as to the golden mean of character and conduct, committed to writing by one of his disciples. I cannot better exhibit the views of Confucius, and therefore of his school to this day, than by giving you an idea of the contents of these books in so far as they refer to our present subject; and I will begin with the Great Learning.

The Great Learning opens with a noble phrase which I was delighted to find echoed in the Congress of British Universities of 1912, where it was clearly emphasized that the aim of education is not the mere imparting of knowledge, but the formation of character, the making of men. This idea was long ago recognized by the great Sage of China, whose opening phrase in the Great Learning I will again quote: 'The Way (or aim) of Education lies in elucidating lucid virtue, in the renovation of the people, and in stopping short of nothing but the *summum bonum*.' He goes on to show that, the aim being known, the mind is made up, quiet and peace take the place of uncertainty, and intent thought leads on to attainment. But just as there is sequence in nature, root before branch, so is there sequence in the extension of virtue; it begins with the ruler and ends with the people. 'The ancients', he says, 'who wished to cause shining virtue to shine forth throughout the empire first ordered well their own States. To do this they first regulated their own families. To do this they first cultivated their external conduct. To do this they first rectified their hearts. To do this they first made their minds sincere. To do this they first extended

to the utmost their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things.'

We have here then the recognition that sincerity and wisdom lead to rectification of the heart, thence to personal conduct, thence to the family, and thence to the State. It must always be borne in mind that it is the ruler to which this refers, for he is to be the exemplar of his people. But we find in other places that Confucius fully recognizes the responsibility of every man, ruler or ruled, to live the noble life, and that the poorest subject can and should be a noble man, 君子.[1] Indeed, in the next clause but one he declares, 'From the Son of Heaven down to the common man, it is all the same, all must consider personal cultivation as fundamental.'

One of the immediate disciples added a commentary to the brief text, illustrating each of its phrases. I need not enter into this further than to quote one or two notable sayings: 'Profound was King Wên. As a sovereign, he rested in benevolence; as a minister, in reverence; as a son, in filial piety; as a father, in kindness; in intercourse with his people, in good faith.' Again: 'Confucius once said, "In hearing law-suits I am like (i.e. no better than) anybody else. What is necessary is to cause that there be no law-suits."' In other words, in the ideal State, virtue would be so developed that crime would not exist.

In regard to sincerity in thought, the disciple says it means no self-deception, a state which he describes as one of self-enjoyment. 'Therefore', he says, 'the wise man is watchful over himself when alone. There is no evil to which the base man when alone will not proceed; but when he sees the wise man he instantly tries to disguise himself, concealing his evil, and appearing to be good. Of what use is this, seeing that the wise man beholds him as clearly as if he saw his heart and reins? Hence the

[1] Literally, 'A prince's son.'

saying: "That which is really within shows itself without. Therefore the wise man is always watchful when alone."' And the next sentence implies that a man is least alone when alone: 'What ten eyes behold, what ten hands point at—how awe-inspiring!' And he adds, 'Just as riches adorn a house, so virtue adorns the person, resulting in a mind at ease and a body in comfort. Therefore the wise man always keeps his mind sincere.'

The principle of altruism finds substantial expression in such clauses as the following, taken from the disciple's commentary: 'When the ruler behaves to his aged as they should be behaved to, the people become filial; when to his elders as elders should be behaved to, the people learn their duty to their seniors; when he treats compassionately the young and helpless, the people do the same. Thus he has a principle with which, as with a carpenter's square, he may regulate his conduct. What a man dislikes in his superiors, let him not display in the treatment of his inferiors; what he dislikes in the treatment of his inferiors, let him not display in the service of his superiors; . . . what he hates to receive on the right let him not bestow on the left;—this is the way of the measuring square.'

Finally, we have the remark twice repeated, 'Let not the nation count wealth as wealth; let it count righteousness as wealth.'

Turning now to the Doctrine of the Mean, we find the text to consist of five brief paragraphs compiled by Tzŭ Ssŭ, a disciple of Confucius, summing up the teaching of his master on the subject of the golden mean. It is followed by an exposition, in which Confucius is frequently quoted. Into the exposition I will not enter, but content myself with repeating the text:

'That which Heaven has conferred is called the Nature, accordance with this (heaven-given) nature is called the

Tao (Way, or Path), the regulation of this Way is called Instruction (or Education). The Way may not be left for an instant. If it could be left it would not be the Way. Therefore the wise man is cautious about the invisible, and is apprehensive in regard to the inaudible. For there is nothing more open than the secret (or, than things done in secret), and nothing more manifest than the minute (or, than his most trifling deeds). Therefore the wise man is watchful over himself when alone.

'While there are no emotions of pleasure or anger, sorrow or joy, it is called the Mean or Equilibrium. When these emotions act in their due degree, it is called a condition of Harmony. The Mean is the radical cosmic principle. Harmony is the pervading cosmic Tao, or Law. Let the states of the Mean and of Harmony exist perfectly, and universal order will result and all things be nourished.'

In the exposition we are told that this middle path of harmony is not far from men, that common men, though ignorant, may walk in it, while there are degrees to which even the Sage cannot attain. We are told that 'when one cultivates to the full the principles of his (divine) nature, and exercises them on the basis of sympathy, he is not far from the path'. And this is summed up in the form of the golden rule, 'Do not unto others what you would not like yourself.' We are told also, that the wise man seeks his rectification from within and seeks nothing from others, so that he has no dissatisfactions. He does not murmur against Heaven above, nor grumble against men below. Consequently he is quiet and calm, attending on the will of Heaven, but the base man will venture on most dangerous ground trusting to his good luck. Finally, there is a long and excellent disquisition on sincerity, for 'it is only the man possessed of perfect sincerity who can perfect his (divinely-conferred) nature', and through that go on to

perfect men and things, thus aiding in the transforming and nourishing work of Heaven and earth.

I think you will be able to gather from the above very brief synopsis that the Doctrine of the Mean places an admirable standard before the man who would live a moral life. Not only is the golden rule stated, but again emphasis is laid on the idea that a man is least alone when alone, for there is the higher 'sanction' of the spiritual world in that unseen powers are taking note of his life and character, even when he is in secret. And I maintain that we missionaries owe to Confucius a debt of deep gratitude for thus preparing our way, and that he has been a worthy schoolmaster leading men toward the Universal Christ whom we have the privilege of bringing 'not to destroy, but to fulfil'.

Time will not permit me to summarize the teaching of the Analects, but I may briefly say that we find therein excellent moral teaching, with a total absence, as is the case with all the Chinese classics, of those indecencies which are found in the ancient writings of other nations. In the Analects we have the golden rule as given above twice stated. We also have the five virtues frequently mentioned—namely, kindness, justice, reverence, wisdom, and good faith. Needless to say, great emphasis is laid upon filial piety and respect to seniors.

Filial piety and respect to seniors is spoken of as the root of all human duty. Confucius said, 'When a youth is at home, let him be filial; when abroad, respectful to his elders; let him be circumspect and sincere, and while exhibiting a comprehensive love for all men, let him ally himself with the good. Having so acted, if he have energy to spare, let him employ it in study.' Filial piety consists not merely in making provision for the material needs of the parents, but in the sincerest affection. The utmost sympathy should prevail between them, so that the wants

of the parents may even be anticipated before spoken. It is said of one of the disciples that such sympathy existed between him and his mother that once, when he was away on the hill-side, and she was in great need of him, she bit her finger, the pain being transferred to him on the distant hill, from which he hastened home to her help. The equality of parents is fully recognized, the mother being considered as equal to the father in her children's affections and treatment.

Filial duty on the part of the son does not involve blind obedience, for it demands that the son should with all reverence repeatedly expostulate with a parent who would do wrong. Nor does filial duty end with the parent's death. In the days of Confucius it was incumbent upon the eldest son to remain by the parent's grave for the three years of mourning. Moreover, sons must regularly observe the sacrificial rites to their forefathers. I have already expressed the opinion that modern China will settle this question of ancestor-worship for itself. In the meantime it becomes Christian missionaries to recognize the good there is behind the manifest superstition which accompanies it, to remember that it has done more than all else to keep alive the belief in immortality and that sympathetic consideration will be more effective than rude antagonism.

In addition to the virtues previously referred to, others find a mention in the Analects. Courage, of the right kind, is recognized, and one of the Sage's principal disciples was noted for this characteristic, ultimately dying in defence of his prince. Loyalty to sovereign and prince is also highly praised. There are three for whom a man should be ready to die—his prince, his parent, and his preceptor. Courtesy, earnestness or devotion, modesty, and humility are emphasized. Specious or ready talk is deprecated, as also are boasting and partisanship. Lust is condemned. Sincerity and good faith are extolled, indeed Confucius

says that he does not know how a man can get on without them. Humanity, or charity, and sympathy are the sum of the virtues. Indeed it is virtue, in the sense of humanity, and not wealth, which makes a neighbourhood worth living in, and without virtue Confucius does not consider a man fit to take part in religious worship.

I can make but a passing reference to Mencius. He expounded and emphasized the ethics of his master, and much might be quoted did time permit. In his day a great discussion had arisen as to the nature of man, whether it was good or evil, whether man was born with a good or an evil nature. Mencius, following the implied lead of his master, maintained the innate goodness of human nature. This was a natural corollary of the doctrine that man's nature was divinely conferred, for it was impossible to maintain that Heaven, being good, could have conferred an evil nature upon men. That men were evil was recognized, but this was due to their bad upbringing. By nature they were good; in practice they left their inborn goodness.

Nor has Taoism added much to the moral principles enunciated by Confucius. Its emphasis is, or originally was, on quiescence. A natural outcome of this doctrine finds admirable expression in the Tao Tê Ching, where its author advocates the rendering of good for evil, a stage Confucius was unable to reach, any more than most of us are able to do in practice. That the idea was already known in the days of Confucius is evident from the question put to him by an inquirer, 'What do you think about the principle of requiting enmity with kindness?' He replied, 'With what, then, would you requite kindness? Reward enmity with just treatment, and kindness with kindness.'

As to Buddhism its addition to the moral ideas of the Chinese has chiefly been the inculcation of a doubtful form of mercy towards animals. Snakes and vermin are

set free; fat animals, birds, and fishes are fed in the Buddhist temples. The ox is taboo as food to many, partly out of gratitude for its services in ploughing the fields, but chiefly as the result of Hindu notions. It cannot be said that Buddhism has added much of value to the ethical ideas of the country, although its objection to taking life in any form has added weight to the quality of mercy already advocated by Confucius and the other sages.

It is perhaps well to add that the anger and irascibility which are so often observed amongst Europeans are considered as evidence that foreigners have not attained to the self-control so strongly advocated by the great founders of the three religions. To the Chinese this is one of the four vices, wine, women, wealth (or covetousness), and wrath. Nevertheless, the Chinese are far from being the pacific people that some would have us believe.

In closing, let me expostulate against the injustice which the repetition of the words 'Chinese vice' has done to the Chinese. No really vicious nation can live and grow, but China has lived long and grown great. Vice is, unfortunately, all too plentiful in China. Drunkenness does exist, but is not habitual. On the other hand, gambling and adultery are very prevalent. Infanticide, that is, of baby girls, is not uncommon, being almost entirely due to poverty. Filthy language pours in streams from the lips, even of young children. Anger, quarrelling, fighting, slaying, are of very frequent occurrence. Stealing, robbery, bribery, and 'squeezing' abound. Lying and cheating are prevalent, but are clearly recognized as wrong, especially when found out. Not infrequently acts of the grossest cruelty are perpetrated.

Nevertheless, the best of the nation are, on the whole, of a virtue that commands respect, and the mass of the people live their simple lives, stupidly, ignorantly, and

decently, often showing great kindness to each other. Honesty in trade is the best policy, and hitherto in his dealings with his own people, as well as with foreigners, a Chinese merchant's word has been his trustworthy bond.

We go, therefore, to a people who know the right, and what we can take them is a Power that makes for righteousness.

LECTURE X

SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

It has been said that the Chinese have no word which connotes our idea of sin, and there is much truth in the assertion. Now sin is a fundamental doctrine in Christian dogmatics; whether rightly or wrongly it is not our province here to discuss, but the fact remains that a large part of our doctrine and the offices of the Church are built upon the basis of sin—the fall of man, atonement, sacrifice, conversion, faith, salvation, justification, sanctification, the future state, and so on. It will be seen, therefore, that the preaching of these doctrines to the Chinese requires that they should have a clear idea of what we mean by sin. Equally important is it that the missionary should have some conception of the meaning which the people see in the terms used, as distinguished from the technical meaning which the missionary reads into them. Here I would like to utter a word of advice to those who may need it, and that is not to count it waste time to inquire into the value of every technical term we missionaries use in China, to master their original native meaning, and know for oneself what is the sense in which the non-Christian Chinese are understanding our terms. Remember, we have had to adopt existing terms, which already had acquired their own connotation, and just as Christianity, for instance, put a new meaning into the word love, so we to-day are using Chinese terms in a fuller sense than that in which they employ them. The consequence of this is, that frequently a missionary may use a term which has

a meaning to himself which it does not convey to his hearer. The study of terminology is therefore of real value. The 'feel' of the term may partly be gained by reading, but it can only be perfected by mixing with the people and observing in what sense they themselves apply the terms. This alone gives a due appreciation of the shades of meaning, in consequence of which clear mutual understanding may be attained.

The words we use for sin are instances of this. We have three principal terms: 罪 tsui, sin; 惡 O, evil; and 過 kuo, transgression. These are often coupled to form a double word, as in tsui-o, or tsui-kuo. Other terms, such as 犯 fan, offence, 孽 nieh, ill, ills, 愆 ch'ien, error, are used, generally in combination with tsui, or kuo, but with these I need not deal.

Not one of these terms, or any combination of them, exactly connotes our idea of sin. The word tsui, which comes nearest to it, also means crime, and while converts soon become used to it—perhaps too much so—and while we can show good precedents for its employment in a sense approaching the Christian term, yet there are many Chinese sufficiently unsophisticated to resent being called tsui ren, or criminals. They are neither murderers, thieves, nor ruffians! What law of the empire have they broken? If it be pointed out that men walk in the procession of a god in chains, with dishevelled locks, in prisoner's garb, with the word tsui or fan, criminal or offender on their backs, captives as it were in the triumph of the god, even this does not throw the light on the objector's mind which we desire. For those men walk as his prisoners or captives in consequence of some vow to do so if restored to health from sickness, or for some other benefit received.

Now, tsui in its present form consists of two parts, a net, and wrong. It implies caught in the net of the law

through wrong-doing, in other words criminal. The next word, 'o', is composed of heart and second, that is a secondary or unnatural heart, and means bad, vicious. It is sometimes wise to take a man's measure before calling him bad or vicious. The third term is kuo, which consists of the curious formation of a wry mouth and to go. Its meaning is to go beyond, and in the moral sense means transgression.

Having given you an idea of the formation and meaning of the three principal terms we have to use, and into which we have to import a fuller, possibly even a somewhat different meaning, I propose to treat the subject somewhat historically, and explain what ideas the Chinese have had and have of the notion of sin, its consequences, and the way of escape.

In my last lecture I showed that the Chinese possess an admirable moral code. Recognizing, in no uncertain fashion, divine sanction for that code, and observing as they do the logical sequence of cause and effect, they must and do possess, and indeed, throughout recorded history always have possessed, a sense of sin and its consequences. Nevertheless, as is often the case in our own country, cause and effect, sin and its consequences, are often imperfectly discriminated, and calamity such as sickness, death, misfortune in any shape, is not differentiated from its cause, but is looked upon as punishment, probably for some unknown fault, or, may be, superstitiously ascribed to something which has no real connexion with the calamity. Bearing in mind that the word tsui, in its present form, means caught in the net of the law through wrong-doing, it is easy to see why Chinese often call themselves sinners when they mean sufferers, or suffering punishment. This is indeed a very usual conception of the word, and very many native converts style themselves tsui ren, or sinners, when they only mean that they are

undergoing some buffet of fortune, some illness or other calamity. They are often unconscious of any cause, but consider they must have done something morally wrong, or neglected some religious duty, to bring upon themselves their misunderstood woe.

It is of value to find, however, that sin in the sense of moral and spiritual delinquency, as well as in the sense of punishment, has been recognized throughout past ages. The first mention we have of divine retribution is in the days of the second emperor, Shun, who, as you have seen, declares that Heaven is sending down judgement upon the prince of the Miao. The judgement of Heaven was falling upon him, according to Shun, because of his ill-government and insolence, and because he was a rebel to the way of Heaven and to virtue. The real reason was probably because he resisted the aggression of the advancing foreign Chinese. It is noticeable, however, that it is because of moral delinquency that divine judgement is said to be coming upon him, and Shun is the instrument for punishing his tsui, or crimes.

In the reign of Shun's successor, Yü, we are told that 'Heaven bestows its will on the virtuous, who obtain the five kinds of robes and the five decorations; but Heaven condemns the guilty (tsui), for whom there are the five punishments'. For 'Heaven hears and sees as our people hear and see; Heaven is gloriously awe-inspiring, as my people stand in glorious awe:—such is the connexion between the upper and lower worlds. How reverent ought the masters of earth to be!' From this it will be seen that divine rewards and punishments are clearly acknowledged, but that they are limited to this life. This need not surprise us. It is largely the view exhibited in the Old Testament, and we shall find it stretching throughout pre-Confucian, indeed, pre-Buddhist, times. Not that there is no implied recognition of reward hereafter. There

is, even though the original religion of China knows nothing of the dualistic division of heaven and hell. The presence of the ancestors of King Wu and Duke Wên in heaven, and their influence with Heaven, which I have brought before your attention, give sufficient evidence that the reward of the virtuous was not considered to be limited to this life.

As to the protection, favour, and gifts of Heaven in this life as the reward of virtue, these find frequent mention from the days of Yü downwards, especially in reference to the continued occupancy of the throne. The emperor occupies it on a moral and spiritual responsibility. If he maintain that trust, he will be blessed. If he fail in his trust, Heaven will send down woe, and even remove him and his line, entrusting the responsibility and honour to one more worthy. Therefore even the emperor may be a tsui ren, a sinner, just as much as, or more than a common man.

This is exemplified so early as the beginning of the first dynasty, during the reign of the great Yü's grandson, who lived a wild and reckless life. His five brothers, perceiving the impending ruin, each made a verse of poetry, in which they bemoan their brother's lapse from virtue. Amongst other things the first says:

> When I look throughout the empire,
> Of the simple men and simple women,
> Any one may surpass me;
> But if the One Man repeatedly fail,—

how can anything but ruin befall? The second brother says:

> With the palace a wild for lust,
> And the country a wild for hunting,
> When wine is sweet, and music the delight,
> When lofty roofs and carved walls rise, . . .
> These are but the prelude to ruin,—

and so on.

Again, in a later reign the powerful officials who acted as Astronomers-Royal had neglected their duties, so that the calendar was all wrong. A certain prince was authorized by the new king to 'execute the punishment appointed by Heaven', and, when calling upon the army to aid him, he addressed them thus: 'Now here are these two official astronomers. They have entirely subverted their virtue, and are sunk and lost in wine.' Therefore he set out as the commissioner of Heaven to punish them.

But the two most vivid instances of royal lapse from virtue and the punishment of Heaven are those of the last emperor of the Hsia and the last of the Shang, or Yin dynasties. It may suffice to relate only the first of these, the other bearing a strong likeness to it.

The emperor's name was Chieh. He and the last sovereign of the succeeding dynasty are as notorious in Chinese as Nero is in Roman history. Both were monsters of cruelty, lust, and self-indulgence. When Prince T'ang raised the standard against Chieh, he commenced his announcement by saying: 'It is not I, this child, who dare undertake the setting up of rebellion, but for the many crimes (tsui) of the Hsia king, Heaven has willed his destruction. . . . The sovereign of Hsia is an offender (tsui) and as I fear God, I dare not but punish him. . . . Assist me, the One Man, I pray you (officers) to carry out the punishment of Heaven.'

It is made clear later that the crimes of Chieh were sins against virtue and against Heaven. And it is evident that the use of sin, tsui, here closely approximates to the idea embodied in our term sin. After T'ang had ascended the throne he himself says, 'The king of Hsia extinguished his virtue and played the tyrant. . . . Suffering from his cruel injuries . . . you (people) protested with one accord your innocence to the spirits of heaven and earth. The way of Heaven is to bless the good and to punish the bad.

It sent down calamities on Hsia, to make manifest its crimes (tsui). Therefore, I (its) child, receiving the will of Heaven with its effulgent awe, did not dare to forgive, but presuming to offer a sable bullock, and making clear announcement to the spiritual Sovereign of the high heavens, requested leave to deal with the ruler of Hsia as a criminal. . . . Let every one observe to keep the statutes, that we may receive the protection of Heaven. Whatever good is in you, I will not dare to conceal. As for the evil (tsui) in myself, I will not dare to forgive myself, but will examine all things in harmony with the mind of God. If guilt (tsui) is to fall anywhere in your myriad regions, let it fall on me. If guilt (tsui) is found in me the One Man, it will not attach to you of the myriad regions. Oh, let us constantly be sincere and so attain a happy consummation.'

I have given this remarkable passage to show that sin is recognized as an offence against virtue, and not only so, but as an offence against God, which He will punish. True, the punishment is given in this life and no mention is made as to its continuation hereafter, as in Old Testament times, for the time present was what mattered, and the time to come had not been sufficiently considered to obtain definition.

Similarly, when Shou, the Nero of the Yin dynasty, had become intolerable, King Wu arose to destroy him. He plainly does so as carrying out the will of God, stating that he does it because Shou did not reverence Heaven above, had abandoned himself to vice, and cruelly oppressed the people, so that Imperial Heaven was moved to anger. Shou neither served God nor the spirits of heaven and earth; he neglected also the temple of his ancestors, and did not offer sacrifices in it; in addition he was dissolute, intemperate, reckless, and oppressive, so that the cry of the innocent went up to Heaven, and

the evil odour of such a state was plainly perceived on high. Therefore, as the instrument of Heaven, King Wu 'respectfully executed the punishment of Heaven', in 'reverent compliance with the will of God (Shang Ti)'.

I need not dwell any longer on this part of the subject, but will turn to the teachings of Confucius and his school.

One of our leading British educators recently remarked to me, that one feature of the Chinese people specially interesting to him was that there we have a great nation, whose ethics are independent of religious sanction. My reply to him was that, far from this being the case, the ethics of the Chinese have always been subject to the sanction of religion, at the very least subject to the important sanction contained in the idea of ancestor-worship. More than this, however, behind all is the conception that man's moral nature is bestowed by Heaven, and that the social order, with the obligations attaching thereto, are of divine ordinance. All this is clearly evidenced not only in the pre-Confucian classics, but in the Four Books of the Confucian period.

Nevertheless, the interesting fact remains that Confucius and his immediate disciples occupy themselves with the inculcation of virtue, for its own sake as well as for the happiness and good fortune that it brings in this life, rather than with the character and consequences of sin. They seem to leave it as self-evident that evil is evil, and the mundane consequences at least must approximate.

The principal occasion on which Confucius refers to tsui, sin, is interesting, as showing that sin against Heaven leaves man in an utterly hopeless position. 'If a man sin against Heaven,' he says, 'he has nowhere left for prayer.' Yet even in this case there is still the open and effectual door of reformation always left to every man. Mencius makes this very clear when he says: 'Even though a man be evil (o), if he fast and bathe, he, too, may serve God

(Shang Ti).'[1] And it seems evident that by fasting and bathing, Mencius means something more than the mere physical act, for both he and Confucius lay great emphasis upon the spirit which lies behind formal sacrifice and worship.

Transgression, or error (kuo), is not infrequently mentioned, and reform is both advocated and deemed sufficient. 'To err and yet not reform, this may indeed be called error,' says Confucius.[2] What is to happen to the sinful man, the evil man, or the unrepentant transgressor is not discussed. It is implied that he will come to a bad end, but in what way is not clear. 'Man is born for uprightness,' says Confucius; 'without it he is lucky if he escapes with his life.'[3] And Mencius distinctly says[4] that weal and woe are of men's own making, and quotes in confirmation the Ode which says: 'Constantly strive to be in harmony with the (divine) will, and thereby get for yourself much happiness.' He also quotes the History: 'Woes of Heaven's making may be avoided, but woes of one's own making cannot be escaped.' He says elsewhere: 'If you know that a mode of action is wrong, then use all dispatch in putting an end to it. Why wait till next year?'[5]

It is evident, then, the law of cause and effect was the recognized rule of the moral world, at least in so far as this life is concerned. As to the character of the life beyond the grave, Confucius and his disciples are silent, as well with regard to the good as the bad.

Practically the same may be said of Taoism in its unadulterated primitiveness, though the more speculative minds of the Taoist founders anticipate a state of happiness outside the flesh, and one which will result from moral

[1] Mencius, Book IV, part ii, sec. xxv.
[2] Analects, xv, 29.
[3] Analects, vi, 17.
[4] Mencius, II, i, iv, 5, 6.
[5] Mencius, III, ii, viii, 3.

and spiritual development in this life. What may be the consequences in the next world of an immoral or unspiritual life is left undefined.

It was not, indeed, until the importation of Buddhism that the future state began to receive definition. Even to this day the strict follower of Confucius, while recognizing, through ancestor-worship, the continued existence of the departed, does not, in theory at least, consider any of his own ancestors as existing in hell. Such an idea would be intolerable to a filial son. We may say, then, that the ancient Chinese resembled the men in Old Testament times in that rewards and punishments were looked for in this life, and as to their continuance beyond the portals of the grave, silence reigns. In China this need cause little surprise, certainly not so much as in the case of the Israelites, especially when the elaborate doctrines held by the neighbouring Egyptians as to the state after death be taken into consideration.

After the introduction of Buddhism a far-reaching change took place in Chinese notions regarding the future state. In my lecture on the soul I explained that the subdivision into heaven and hell, together with the doctrine of transmigration of the soul, of which there is no trace in early Chinese works, resulted in the extension of rewards and punishments into a life that is eternal, and in the inculcation of methods of avoiding punishment and of releasing those who, it was surmised, had not escaped. Following on this, as elsewhere, came increase in the influence and power of the priest. Subsequently the ideas of sin, retribution in a future life, means of release and escape, and soteriological theories entered into the Taoist, and even into the Confucian cult, so far as the official worship of tutelary deities can be called Confucian.

In the present day, therefore, in the official religion we have representations of the Chinese Pluto and Hades in

every official centre, that is in every city. The next world has come to be looked upon as a replica of this world. Shang Ti, the Celestial Emperor was worshipped by the Son of Heaven, or terrestrial emperor. Shang Ti has his host of ministers and subordinates, his palace, his yamens everywhere, his place for the good, and his very lurid hell for the evil. Subordinate to Shang Ti are other Ti's, or divine rulers, and Wangs, or divine kings, all in the spirit world.

There are numerous judges in the spirit yamens, with their secretaries, lictors, torturers, also prisoners undergoing examination for the things done in this life. Each spirit prisoner is taken before the judge appointed to try the offences of which he has been guilty, whether for unfilialness, adultery, robbery, cruelty, or other offences moral and conventional. It is no use trying to hide the facts, for does not 'the book' reveal them in incontrovertible detail. The poor prisoner may have believed during life that by feasting the ever-observant kitchen god, whose paper face adorns the kitchen throughout the year, and by smearing his lips with sweetstuff, he would speak only honeyed words to the recorders of the spirit yamen, and gloss over or forget the ill-deeds inscribed upon his paper memory. But the opening of the books by the judge finds no trace of the feast or the honey. Perhaps the fire which sent up the kitchen god in smoke pained his righteous soul to the forgetting of honey and fat things. Any way, there is no gainsaying the records, and the poor prisoner must go to his agonies. And how can he complain? Has he not all his life had the most vivid warning before him of what would happen? Has he not been familiar with the saw, the pincers, the mill, the hammer, the boiling oil, the spit, the lake of blood, the whole round of torture? Or is it that familiarity has bred a contempt now to be mightily cured? Whatever

the facts, there is no escape from a myriad-fold retribution for his sins.

This dualistic division in the future state cannot be debited, or credited, to Confucianism. In the State religion it owes its introduction to Mahāyāna Buddhism, through Taoist channels. Such a clear line of demarcation had not been reached by original Taoism. It was only arrived at consequent on the adoption of an imported idea, which, true to the instincts of later Taoism and of the Chinese people, was soon clothed in Chinese garb. Taoism is a Chinese cult and is typical of the national character. It is perfectly willing to adopt imported ideas, but it likes to nationalize them. So while Taoism has adopted the principal doctrines of Mahāyāna Buddhism, it has refused to adopt Buddhist terminology, but has influenced Chinese officialdom to build Chinese yamens in 'the shades', fit up Chinese punishments, and appoint Chinese judges. All must be Chinese, not foreign.

It will thus be seen that Buddhism has had an almost revolutionary influence on Chinese religious thought. What the Chinese moral and philosophical systems lacked in definition of the unseen world was supplied, so far as it was supplied, by Buddhism, and no one can complain of lack of quantity. As already stated, Buddhism added nothing of value to the moral teachings of the purely national thinkers. In practice it may have stood for kindness and humanity, carrying these principles to excess in regard to animals and parasites—but it added nothing to the ideals of Confucius, Mencius, Laocius, and Chuang-tzŭ. Its influence lay in its doctrine of and relating to the last things. From these Taoism took the soul and forced it with scant consideration for its feelings into a Chinese body. The result has been that while the Taoist cult has its distinctive characteristics, especially as the custodian of the ancient mythical, magical,

and even mystical ideas of the Chinese, it has so many features in common with Buddhism, that Buddhists and Taoists fraternize over the feasts of the dead, and find profit therein.

I need not dwell at length upon the future state as exhibited in Buddhism, beyond saying that in the Mahāyāna form in which it exists to-day, important ideas not found in original Buddhism are its most effective doctrines. Its ideas of retribution and salvation are not found in the original school of Buddhism. The influence of the religion on Western theology through Gnosticism, a term similar in meaning to Buddhism, has already been referred to, and it may some day be proved that Western ideas of retribution and salvation are at the base of the teachings of the Mahāyāna system as found in China and Japan. When the Roman missionaries went first to China and found the Buddhist priests vested like themselves and performing offices all too closely resembling their own, they thought it was the work of the devil to defeat Mother Church. Any one acquainted with the Buddhist ceremonial who visits a Roman service will feel very much at home. Even the Buddhist chants are in a foreign tongue, transliterated Sanskrit, just as the offices in a Roman Church are in Latin.

In regard then to the future state the Buddhist doctrine in China is that the sinful soul is transported at death to the prison of Yāma, whence, after undergoing the punishments which it has deserved, and drinking the waters of Lethe, it comes forth to enter that shape for which its previous existence on this earth has fitted it, whether man, woman, beast, bird, fish, or parasite. This doctrine of metempsychosis accounts for the Buddhist's kindness to living things. It is the doctrine of the future state which has given the priest his power and Buddhism its revolutionary influence on Chinese religious life.

This brings us to the subject of soteriology. What are the views of the Chinese in regard to salvation? I have explained enough of the Confucian attitude of mind to lead you to see that such a notion as salvation takes no prominence in that cult. The way of salvation is in living a virtuous life. Heaven blesses and accepts such a man. If he does wrong and lives an evil life let him reform, and God will accept him. If he die in his sins, well, Heaven has caused him to perish as he deserved. What of the afterwards is not discussed.

The advent of Buddhism, with its intimation of a dualism in the future life and its suggestion of pains and penalties prolonged beyond the mortal, together with possibilities of escape from the effects of this evil world, brought an intellectual and a spiritual stimulus. Questions began to be asked to which Confucianism had no answer to give, and Taoism an insufficient one. It is natural to infer that the fate of parent or of child became matter of anxiety to multitudes of sorrowing people. And while Buddhism brought the evils of hell with it, it also brought a light of salvation. A dim light it may have been, yet it did not merely intensify the gloom of the abyss, but revealed a way upwards for the living, and showed a glimmer even for those who had slipped away down into the gulf.

The searchings of the human spirit in China down to the times of the great sages had discovered the moral and spiritual law of retribution, good and evil, but its definition was not made clear beyond the present life, nor even in this life did the law seem to be of universal application. As to escape from evil, no help was offered to the mass of tempted ones but the arduous road of virtuous reform. The doctrine was good so far as it went, but, unaided by the doctrine of prayer and communion with the divine, it left man a prey to his weakness and his fears. Buddhism

came with a positive doctrine of reward for the good and punishment for the evil carried by natural law into the unseen world. But it did not leave matters there. It brought also a doctrine of salvation and charged the spiritual atmosphere with a new energy, permeated the national thought and literature, took possession of Taoism, and even saturated the later schools of Confucian philosophy, so that the national religion was impelled to admit a debased presentation of the distinctive features of Buddhism into the temples of its public tutelary deities.

It is perhaps in Taoistic literature, the best of which is from the pens of men trained in the Confucian school, that we find how it has influenced the Chinese mind. Take the Taoist work, the Kan Ying P'ien, or Tractate on actions and their consequences, which was composed nearly a thousand years ago, and which is one of the most popular religious works in China. Its opening words are:

'Woe and weal have no gates (i. e. are not predestined), men call them on themselves. The rewards of good and evil follow as shadow follows substance. For in heaven above and earth below there are the spirits who take account of men's transgressions, and according to the gravity of their offences curtail their allotted span. Curtailment results in poverty and degradation, and the encountering of many sorrows and afflictions. They will be hated of men, doom and woe attend them, while luck and felicity shun them, and malignant stars bring disaster upon them. When their lot is fulfilled they die.

'There are also the divinities over head in the northern constellation, which record men's sins and evils, and take away from their allotted span. And there are the three body-divinities within each man, who on the cycle days ascend to the Court of Heaven to report men's sins and

transgressions. On the last day of the moon the kitchen god does the same.

'All who transgress, for greater lose a chi (i. e. 12 years), for lesser they lose a suan (i. e. 100 days). Transgression great and small is seen in several hundred things. He who wishes for long life must first and foremost avoid these. In the way that is right let him go forward. From the way that is wrong let him withdraw. Let him not walk in devious ways, nor wrong himself in secret. Let him lay up virtue and amass merit, be compassionate to (all) creatures, loyal, filial, faithful to friends, and respectful to elders. Let him correct himself and transform others. Let him pity the fatherless and show kindness to the widow, reverence the old, and cherish the young. Even creeping things, plants, and trees let him not injure. Let him sorrow over men's ills, and rejoice over their good, help them in their straits, and save them in their perils. Let him look upon the (blessings) received by others as if they were his own, and upon the losses of others as if they were his own losses. Let him not show up their short-comings, nor make a display of his own long-comings (superiorities). Let him resist that which is evil and spread abroad that which is good. Let him yield much and take little, receive insult without resentment, and favour with (grateful) surprise, bestow kindness without seeking a return, and give to others without regret. Such a man is called a good man—all men reverence him, Heaven in its course protects him, blessing and prosperity attend him, all evil influences keep far from him, the spirits defend him, whatsoever he doeth prospers, and he may aspire to immortality (literally, to become one of the spirit genii, in other words, an angel of light). He who seeks to become a heavenly angel (a genii, or superior immortal) should establish one thousand three hundred good works. He who seeks to become an earthly angel (i. e.

an inferior immortal) should establish three hundred good works.'

After this follows a long list of evil deeds, beginning with the statement that if a man's doings be unjust, or his actions opposed to what is right, if he count his evil for ability, and so on, then his life will be cut short, and unrequited guilt will fall upon his posterity. Amongst the list of evil deeds mention is made of the use of sympathetic magic to injure another, such as burying the image of a man to destroy him, and towards the end, possibly by a later hand, a number of puerilities are found. It closes with the following sentiments:

'Now when the heart rises to goodness, although the good be not yet done, the spirits of good fortune attend him. And when the heart rises to evil, although the evil be not yet done, the spirits of ill fortune attend him. If a man have already committed ill deeds, but afterwards alter his ways in remorse, doing no more evil, but respectfully doing all good, he will certainly in the long run obtain good fortune and felicity, and as it is said, "change woe to weal." Therefore the good man (or fortunate man) talks of the good, contemplates the good, and does what is good. Each day maintaining these three good courses, in three years Heaven will assuredly send blessings upon him. The bad (or ill-starred) man talks of evil, contemplates evil, and does what is evil. Each day maintaining these evil courses, in three years Heaven will assuredly send woe upon him. Why will not men exert themselves and do what is good?'

This is a book which every missionary ought to read. It is the high-water mark of Chinese detailed description of good and evil, and is one of the most popular books in the country. There is another booklet to which I must make reference. It is called the Kung Kuo K'o, or Diary of Merits and Demerits. Lists of good and ill deeds are

given and marks indicated whereby a man may keep account with himself of his deeds, setting off his bad actions against his good ones. Stopping a fight counts plus 3; inducing people to abstain from flesh for a year counts plus 20; gossiping with evil tongue minus 3; to return favours plus 20; to keep a promise seems to be considered as a mark of merit, for it counts plus 1; to abstain from taking a thing not one's own counts also plus 1; sincerity counts plus 1 per day; betrayal of a neighbour's secrets counts minus 50.

It will be seen then from the above quotations that the Taoists believe in the evil consequences of moral delinquency, and that those consequences do not end with this life. This is even more evident in the ceremonies performed by the Taoist priests over the dead. As to salvation for the living that is to be obtained chiefly by repentance and reformation, while as to the salvation of the dead ceremonies are necessary. The Taoist trinity may be invoked, as also such goddesses as the Hsi Wang Mu (the Royal Mother of the Western Paradise), and T'ien Fei (the Queen of Heaven), the latter much worshipped by sailors, and others. But the salvation looked for from these is chiefly salvation from distress in this life.

Buddhism, true to its Mahāyāna nature, devotes itself more definitely to objective preparation for and salvation in the continued life. Its Saviour is Amitābha, Ju-lai, the Coming Buddha, and, for men as well as for women, the so-called Goddess of Mercy, Kuanyin, who is much addressed as 'Saviour in sorrow and distress, Most compassionate and pitiful, Kuanyin P'usa'. Here again the salvation is mostly sought in affairs relating to this life, but it is not limited thereto, and as a matter of fact many devotees give themselves up to fasting from flesh for given periods, or even for life, and keep count on their beads of the multitudinous repetition of the name of Amitābha, or

some other repetition, all in order to prepare themselves for the life beyond. Sometimes they make long and dangerous journeys to distant and famous monasteries in order to lay up merit and obtain a passport to Heaven which may be laid in their coffins and ensure their acceptance in the spirit world because of their faith while here.

We may say then that sin and its consequences, as well in this life as the next, are clearly recognized, and that the missionary by no means goes to an unprepared people. The notions they possess may be crude. So were those of our forefathers. So perhaps later generations will describe ours. At least we carry the doctrines of a Father and a Saviour.

LECTURE XI

THE OFFICIAL CULT, OR PUBLIC RELIGION

The panorama of Chinese civilization is passing over the curtain with such amazing rapidity, producing effects so kaleidoscopic, that it is almost impossible to say what is now the official religion of the nation, indeed whether it has one at all. When a nation suddenly drops all its courtesy titles it is likely therewith to drop its courtesy and reverence and its religion as well. The Chinese have discarded all 'Your Excellencies', 'Your Worships', and 'Your Honours', so that everybody is plain Mister, from the highest to the lowest. Many temples have also been denuded of their gods. For instance, soon after the Revolution, in the provincial capital of far Yunnan, the City Temple was invaded, and Pluto and his hells all destroyed. The holes in the roads were plugged with the carcasses of the gods, and the traffic passed over them. The process of idol demolition began in 1898, when many temples were turned into schoolrooms. It met with a sudden check when the Empress-Dowager reascended the dragon throne. Then it began again, and no one knows where it will ultimately end. Certain it is that the people will demand religion, but whether they will be contented with a personal or demand a national religion the future alone will decide. How then am I to speak about the official religion of the country, seeing that the old official religion, happily, can never be what it was again?

Nevertheless, I am by no means assured that the past

is wholly past. A nation does not in a sudden paroxysm for ever cast off all its hoary traditions, which are in the very bone and blood. Traditions of this kind reassert themselves, and though they may ultimately evolve into other forms, they retain for long the old spirit. While, therefore, the passing of the throne may have meant the passing of the sacrifices on the one and only altar of Heaven, and while the passing of the sacrifices to Heaven may toll the knell of all official religion, some new form may yet spring out of the old, some last flicker of the dying lamp while the light of the Morning Star steals slowly o'er the Hills of Han. During this interregnum it may be of something more than mere archaeological interest for the student to know what the official religion has heretofore been, indeed, perhaps still is.

Seeing that Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism were all imperially recognized religions, it follows that, from the emperor down to the smallest official, all worshipped at the shrines of all three. Emperor and officials contributed towards the support of, and made their acts of worship before, the shrines of deities, whether Confucian, Buddhist, or Taoist. They did this as part of their official duty in maintaining the religious life of the nation. Sometimes it was a mere duty, an irksome official duty. Sometimes it was a sincere act of worship. Many officials have described their actions in this respect as a concession to the ignorance of the multitude, and expressed their superior disbelief in the whole thing, but in their heart of hearts most of them were as superstitious as the common multitude, and feared, or hoped as much from their act of worship as did the most ignorant plebeian. We are told that all this compulsory official worship is suddenly to end. Well, things are moving rapidly in China, but so long as the people need rain and snow, and so long as flood and pestilence bring destruction and woe in their

train, so long will the ignorant and *exigeant* people bring a compulsion to bear on their officials which only the strong will be able to resist. The pangs of travail are not yet over. The new faith is not yet born.

What, then, is, or was, the official religion? Its centre was the worship of Shang Ti, the Ruler over all, the Supreme Being. Its circumference was the worship and control of demons. Between centre and circumference were concentric circles of nature deities, sages, ancestors, and deified men.

The highest act of national worship was the imperial sacrifice to Shang Ti. Only the emperor, the High Priest of 'the world', the Son of Heaven, might perform this great sacrifice, which existed from all antiquity until the fall of the empire.

The T'ien Tan, or Altar of Heaven, stands in a huge park filled with cypress-trees. It is situated outside the old city of Peking, but has been enclosed by the wall of the more modern Chinese suburb or city. On one of the many brilliant days in which the capital rejoices, a visit to the T'ien Tan is one not easily forgotten. As seen from a distance, the white marble altar, surrounded by trees, is a beautiful pearl set in an emerald ocean. The Hall of Fasting, built on a marble foundation and towering to a height of ninety-nine feet, in which the emperor prepares himself for his sacred duty, raises its triple-roofed circular dome to the sky in the near distance, scintillating like a jewel in the gorgeous sunshine.

It is not thus, however, that the emperor beheld it as he worshipped; for it fell to his lot to pay his duties in the depth of winter and the dead of night. Then, the cold was so intense that, as one who has often officiated there told me, even high wadded boots and the thickest furs failed to keep strong men from chilling to the marrow, and in some cases going to their graves. It was at the

winter solstice that the sovereign shed the blood of sacrifice, when the dying sun had reached its lowest ebb and was again to renew its youth. Whether the rite had any original connexion with the myth of the dying god found in other lands, I cannot either affirm or deny. However this may be, on the day before the sacrifice, the emperor left his palace, 'drawn by an elephant in his state car and escorted by about two thousand grandees, princes, musicians, and attendants, down to the Temple of Heaven. The cortège passes out by the southern road, reaching the Ching Yang Gate, opened only for His Majesty's use, and through it goes on two miles to the T'ien Tan. He first repairs to the Chai Kung, or Palace of Fasting, where he prepares himself by lonely meditation for his duty; "for the idea is that if there be not pious thoughts in his mind the spirits of the unseen will not come to the sacrifice". To assist him he looks at a copper statue, arrayed like a Taoist priest, whose mouth is covered by three fingers, denoting silence, while the other hand bears a tablet inscribed with "Fast three days". When the worship commences, and all the officiating attendants are in their places, the animals are killed, and as the odour of their burning flesh ascends to convey the sacrifice to the gods, the Emperor begins the rite, and is directed at every step by the masters of ceremonies. The worship to Heaven is at midnight, and the numerous poles around the great altar (the thousands of flares and lanterns), and the fires in the furnaces shedding their glare over the marble terraces and richly dressed assembly, render this solemnity most striking'.[1]

The open altar where the actual worship has hitherto been offered is the most important of all China's altars. It is impressive in its simplicity, and one cannot wonder that Dr. Legge, when he visited it, took off his shoes from

[1] Williams's *Middle Kingdom*, vol. ii, p. 196.

off his feet, feeling that he was on holy ground. The following description is adapted from one given by Dr. Edkins.[1]

The Altar consists of a triple circular terrace. The lowest terrace is 210 feet in diameter, the middle one is 150 feet, and the top one 90 feet. In these we may notice the multiples of 3: $3 \times 3, = 9, 3 \times 5 = 15, 3 \times 7 = 21$. The topmost terrace is laid with marble slabs, forming nine concentric circles. According to Dr. Edkins, it was on the circular stone in the centre that the emperor knelt, in the centre of the universe. But according to the laws of the Manchu dynasty, he knelt at the foot of the steps on the second terrace, which lead to the topmost terrace. Facing the north, and thereby assuming the position and attitude of a subordinate, he acknowledged that he was the subject of Heaven. Around the central stone is laid the first circle of nine stones, then follows another of eighteen, another of twenty-seven, and so on in successive multiples of nine till the square of nine, the favourite number of Chinese philosophy, is reached in the outermost circle of eighty-one stones. Beyond this are the circles of the terraces and their enclosing walls, and beyond all the circle of the horizon. For the conception of the circular heaven is maintained in the Temple of Heaven, as the squareness of earth is maintained in the temple associated with its worship. Celestial blue is also the prevailing colour in the Temple of Heaven, as terrestrial yellow is the prevailing colour in the worship of the earth.

At the time of sacrificing, the tablet of Shang Ti was placed on the north of the topmost terrace. It will be seen that idolatry has never been allowed to enter into this ceremony. The tablets of the five founders of the late dynasty, ancestors of the emperor, were then placed in line

[1] Edkins's *Peking*.

on either side, facing east and west. On the middle terrace were placed, on the east the tablet to the sun, with four others below it, one to the north star, another to the five planets, a third to the twenty-eight constellations, and a fourth to the host of stars. On the western side were placed a tablet to the moon, with four others below it, to the clouds, the rain, the wind, and the thunder.[1] From this it will be seen that not only God was worshipped, but the whole host of heaven. The great ancestors of the emperor, the former Ti's upon earth, were associated with the Ti above, not as equals, but partly as bearing Shang Ti company in the feast, and partly as his chief associates in heaven, for the Chinese national religion is essentially geocentric in its character. The whole service was a thanksgiving to Shang Ti, to the great dynastic ancestors, and to the host of heaven for the blessings bestowed from above during the year, as the sacrifice to earth was a similar thanksgiving for the favours it has bestowed. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that neither Shang Ti nor the ancestors were conceived of as anything but spiritual and transcendent. They were not even localized as were the secondary deities, of the sun, moon, and stars, who, while localized, were really discrete from the material object, being spirits controlling these objects, residing in them, yet transcendent of them.

Moreover, the emperor did not himself worship these secondary deities in person. He only worshipped Shang Ti and the Ti's who had preceded him as founders of his greatness. Nor did he offer sacrifices to his ancestors equal with those offered to Shang Ti. True, in most respects these offerings were similar in character and number, consisting not of any modern inventions, but of the food and materials known in ancient times. But while only one piece of silk was offered to the ancestors,

[1] Ross's *The Original Religion of China.*

twelve pieces were offered to Shang Ti, and while the ancestors each had four lamps, Shang Ti had six. The most distinguishing offering, however, was that of a sceptre of blue jade which was placed before the shrine of Shang Ti, as an emblem that all power belongs to Him, and one of equal or greater import was the sacrifice of a whole burnt-offering to Him. This must be a bullock of one colour and free from flaw or blemish.

An interesting part of the ceremony was the reading of the invocation. While it was being read by the proper officer all music ceased, both emperor and officers reverently kneeling. When read it was placed before the shrine of Shang Ti, and the emperor prostrated himself, kotowing the prescribed number of times to the ground. Later the prayer, the silks, and other offerings were placed in the fires of the furnaces. It may be mentioned that during the greater part of the ceremony, which lasted a long time, musicians and posturers were performing below the altar.

As the character of the prayer indicates more clearly what meaning the sacrifice bears in the mind of the worshipper, the following series of prayers is given. They were offered towards the end of the Ming dynasty in the seventeenth century A. D.[1] Of course, it has to be remembered that when these prayers were composed, not only Buddhist, but Christian and Mohammedan influences had made themselves felt in the country. Nevertheless, they are manifestly characteristic of Chinese thought. The prayers were made on a special occasion, when it had been determined to make a change in the name of the Supreme Being. Previously, that name had been Hao T'ien Shang Ti, or Supreme Ruler in (or of) Bright Heaven. Now it was proposed to change this title to Supreme Ruler in (or of) Sovereign Heaven.

[1] Legge's *Religions of China.*

You will notice that the whole host of celestial and terrestrial spirits is invoked, not only those associated with the solstitial worship of Shang Ti, but all the other nature spirits as well. From this we may learn that the supremity of Shang Ti is undoubted, not only over heaven, but over earth, indeed, that He is Lord of the Universe. What the One Man is—or was—on earth, so the One God is in heaven. All the host of nature divinities are only ministers that do His pleasure, angels that perform His will, but able to intercede on behalf of humanity. The first prayer then is to these deified phenomena or forces of nature:

'I, the emperor of the Great Illustrious dynasty, have respectfully prepared this paper to inform the spirit of the sun; the spirit of the moon; the spirits of the five planets, of the constellations of the zodiac, and of all the stars in all the sky; the spirits of the clouds, the rain, wind, and thunder; the spirits which have duties assigned to them throughout the whole heavens; the spirits of the five grand mountains; the spirits of the five guardian hills; the spirits of the five hills, Chi-yün, Hsiang-shêng, Shênlieh, T'ien-shan, and Shun-têh; the spirits of the four seas; the spirits of the four great rivers; the intelligences which have duties assigned to them on the earth; all the celestial spirits under heaven; the terrestrial spirits under heaven; the spirit presiding over the present year; the spirit ruling over the tenth moon, and those of every day; and the spirit in charge of the ground about the border altar.

'On the first day of the coming month, we shall reverently lead our officers and people to honour the great name of Shang Ti, dwelling in the sovereign heavens, looking up to the lofty nine-vaulted azure dome. Beforehand we inform you, all ye celestial and all ye terrestrial spirits, and will trouble you, on our behalf, to exert your spiritual power, and display your most earnest endeavours, communicating

our poor desire to Shang Ti, and praying Him graciously to grant us acceptance and regard, and to be pleased with the title which we shall reverently present.

'For this purpose we have made this paper for your information. All ye spirits should be well aware of our purpose. Ye are respectfully informed.'

When the great day arrived, the emperor greeted the approach of Shang Ti thus:

'Of old, in the beginning, there was the great chaos, without form and dark. The five elements had not begun to revolve, nor the sun and moon to shine. In the midst thereof there presented itself neither form nor sound. Thou, O Spiritual Sovereign, camest forth in Thy presidency, and first did divide the gross from the pure (i. e. the ethereal from the material). Thou madest heaven; Thou madest earth; Thou madest man. All things got their being, with their reproducing power.'

The amended title was then presented with the following address:

'O Ti, when Thou hadst opened the course for the inactive (Yin) and active (Yang) forces of matter to operate, Thy making work went on. Thou didst produce, O Spirit, the sun and moon, and five planets; and pure and beautiful was their light. The vault of heaven was spread out like a curtain, and the square earth supported all on it, and all creatures were happy. I, Thy servant, presume reverently to thank Thee, and, while I worship, present the notice to Thee, O Ti, calling Thee Sovereign.'

Silks and jade were then presented with the following address:

'Thou hast vouchsafed, O Ti, to hear us, for Thou regardest us as our Father. I, Thy child, dull and unenlightened, am unable to show forth my feelings. I thank Thee that Thou hast accepted the intimation. Honourable is Thy great name. With reverence we spread out these

precious stones and silk, and, as swallows rejoicing in the spring, praise Thy abundant love.'

Offerings of food were then made, with the following address:

'The great feast has been set forth, and the sound of our joy is like thunder. The Sovereign Spirit vouchsafes to enjoy our offering, and his servant's heart is within him like a particle of dust. The meat has been boiled in the large caldrons, and the fragrant provisions have been prepared. Enjoy the offering, O Ti, and then shall all the people have happiness. I, Thy servant, receiving Thy favours, am blessed indeed.'

A drink-offering was made with the following:

'The great and lofty One sends down His favour and regard, which we, in our insignificance, are hardly sufficient to receive. I, His simple servant, while I worship, present this precious cup to Him, whose years have no end.'

A thanksgiving followed in these words:

'When Ti, the Lord, had so decreed, He called into existence the three powers (heaven, earth, and man). Between heaven and earth He separately disposed men and things, all overspread by the heavens. I, His small servant, beg His (favouring) decree, to enlighten me, His vassal; so may I ever appear before Him in the empyrean.'

At the second drink-offering it was said:

'All the numerous tribes of animated beings are indebted to Thy favour for their beginning. Men and creatures are emparadised, O Ti, in Thy love. All living things are indebted to Thy goodness, but who knows whence his blessings come to him? It is Thou alone, O Lord, who art the true parent of all things.'

Again, at the third and final drink-offering, it was said:

'The precious feast is wide displayed; the gem-adorned tables are arranged; the pearly spirits are presented, with

music and dancing. The spirit of harmony reigns; men and creatures are happy. The breast of His servant is troubled, that he can make no recompense (for such goodness).'

When the offerings were removed it was further said:

'The service of song is completed, but our poor sincerity cannot be fully expressed. Thy sovereign goodness is infinite. As a potter hast Thou made all living things. Great and small are curtained round (by Thee from harm). As engraven on the heart of Thy poor servant is the sense of Thy goodness, but my feelings cannot be fully displayed. With great kindness Thou dost bear with us, and notwithstanding our demerits dost grant us life and prosperity.'

As a valedictory the two following addresses were made:

'With reverent ceremonies the record has been presented; and Thou, O Sovereign Spirit, hast deigned to accept our service. The dances have been all performed, and nine times the music has resounded. Grant, O Ti, Thy great blessing to increase the happiness of my House. The instruments of metal and precious stones have given out their melody; the jewelled girdles of the officers have emitted their tinklings. Spirits and men rejoice together, praising Ti the Lord. What limit, what measure can there be, while we celebrate His great name? For ever He setteth fast the high heavens, and establisheth the solid earth. His government is everlasting. His poor servant, I bow my head, and lay it in the dust, bathed in His grace and glory.'

Finally:

'We have worshipped and written the Great Name on this gem-like sheet. Now we display it before Ti, and place it in the fire. These valuable offerings of silks and fine meats we burn also, with these sincere prayers, that

they may ascend in volumes of flames up to the distant azure. All the ends of the earth look up to Him. All human beings, all things on the earth, rejoice together in the Great Name.'

Dr. Legge's book is out of print, and I have taken the liberty of making this lengthy quotation as it is deserving of your attention. I think you will agree with me that whatever may have been the origin of religion in China, the highest forms of it, as represented by this series of prayers, have risen to a clear conception of spirit as transcendent of the material. Time will not permit of my attempting to describe the separate temples to and worship of the many celestial and terrestrial divinities referred to above, and who were all supposed to assemble at the ceremony just referred to. On the north of the city is the Altar to Earth. M. de Harlez tells us that this altar was originally built alongside that to Heaven, but was later removed to the opposite end of the city, and the sacrifices to Heaven and earth separated. Now the altar to earth is placed outside the city on the north, as that to Heaven is situated on the south. The temple of the sun is outside the city on the east, as that of the moon is on the west, and the temple of the north star on the north. The altar to Shên Nung, the founder of agriculture, has its temple in close proximity to the altar to Heaven. Indeed, temples seem to exist for all the spirits celestial and terrestrial.

The cult of the ancestor, along with the introduction of Buddhism, has had its natural development in the apotheosis of a multitude of departed worthies. Originally, a man, after his departure from life, was only worshipped by his own descendants and not by others; hence Confucius says, 'He who worships a spirit not belonging to him (i. e. not one of his own family) is a sycophant.' In the imperial and princely ancestral temples, while there

was a host of officers assisting, who were not descendants of the ancestor worshipped, they were not the real worshippers. But with an easy extension of the idea, benefactors of the nation came to receive worship not limited to their own descendants.

Thus, sacrifices were offered in the colleges to the great Duke Wên of the Chou dynasty before the Christian era. In A.D. 57 the greatness of Confucius as a national benefactor had come to be imperially recognized, for he was associated with Duke Wên in sacrifice from that time until A.D. 609, when their temples were separated. From that time to this it is Confucius who reigns 'the ancient Teacher, the Perfect Sage'.

To Confucius, then, sacrifices are offered throughout the empire twice a year, in the spring and autumn. I was present at the spring sacrifices of 1911, when all the high officials of the province of Shansi attended at the temple of Confucius in the darkness of the night before the break of day. It was an imposing sight. Have the sacrifices, I wonder, been offered since then? Will they be offered again?

Time fails to tell in detail of the mingled splendour and sordidness of the rites. Imagine them if you can—gloom of a huge temple dimly lit with many coloured lanterns, unpleasing carcasses of victims laid on the altars before the tablets to the great Sage and his canonized disciples, stringed instruments such as he knew when on earth, wooden frames hung with the stone chimes on which he loved to play, singers and dancers singing and posturing as the verses of 'Great is K'ung Tzŭ, philosopher, The primal Seer, the primal Sage', are slowly chanted, half a dozen high mandarins clad in their gorgeous Court robes, now standing in the courtyard below the steps under the open sky, now prostrating themselves with foreheads to the ground, again, at each offering, marching up

the side steps to the hall, there again prostrating themselves, then back again to the courtyard, time after time, the motley crowd of *literati* and attendants all the time dully awaiting the conclusion of the ceremonies and the sharing of the offerings. It is an impressive and a curious sight, leaving one with the feeling, in the weirdness of the dark night, as of being suddenly transported back through thousands of years to an age which is long past. Is it yet past? If not, it is speedily passing, and I am glad to have been one of its last witnesses. For the dawn is breaking. Yet its brightness leaves a tinge of melancholy as it rudely drives away the fantasies of the darkness.

Not only has Confucius been canonized, but multitudes of other worthies. I have already spoken of Shên Nung, the mythological emperor who taught the art of agriculture. As the food of the people is represented by him, so is the clothing by the patron of sericulture, fire by the red-faced god of fire, rain by the azure-coloured god of rain, and so on. Mars, the god of war, is represented by Kuan Ti, a celebrated general of the third century A. D., who was canonized in the twelfth century and raised to the rank of Ti, or god, in the sixteenth century.

To take you through the round of canonization or apotheosis would require a lecture to itself. Suffice it, that down to the present generation the process of canonization has been going on. Even Li Hung Chang, whose reputation is still under discussion, has been canonized and has his temples. Every prefecture (or county) and every sub-prefecture (or township) has its guardian deity, who, as controller of the wall and moat and of all the spirit forces within it, ranks with the often too fleshly mandarin who presides as 'parent' over the swarming people. I have already referred to the city temples in which these guardian deities have their abode. These deities were once officials in the flesh, and even now, in the spirit, have

not lost their earthly relationships, for the harem is still in evidence in the residential quarters of the deity. To him the living official pays his respects twice a month.

The religious duties of an official are neither few nor easy. What the emperor, as high priest of the nation, is to the higher powers, such is the head of a township, a county, a province, and so on, to the local divinities. It is his bounden duty to keep them all in good temper; he must harmonize not only the living, but the spirits with the living. Hence, in a sense, he, too, occupies the office of patriarch and priest. For the central idea of government being derived from patriarchal times, patriarchal it remains, or did until the Revolution.

When pestilence revels in the filthy canals of the south, or the poisonous atmosphere of ill-ventilated houses in the north, the magistrate's duty it is, not to see that the fêng-shui, the air and water, are purified, but to persuade the spirits of pestilence to withdraw to some wealthier place. He is thus a sort of spiritual policeman, whose duty it is to move on the troublesome.

'One of the most impressive sights I have ever seen in my life was the escorting from Wenchow city of the cholera demons. It was estimated that twenty thousand people had died in the county from this terrible epidemic, and at last—when the epidemic was already dying down—a date was fixed for escorting away with great éclat the unwelcome visitors. For many nights beforehand processions wended their noisy, lantern-lit way through every street of the city and its suburbs, as well as along the great city wall. Torches flared and lanterns twinkled everywhere, the city being lit as if for a fête. The demons were fed and appeased in every lane while their boat was in course of preparation. The boat itself was made, not of stout timbers, but, for the most part, of paper; demons, however, are such fools that they cannot tell the difference

between a seaworthy and a leaky paste-and-paper article. Day by day, the temple where the boat was lodged was thronged by a host of worshippers, who filled the boat with their silver offerings—mock silver, of course, for the Chinese are thrifty and demons are easily gulled. Such a tempting supply! Such an abundance! How could any decent devil refuse them? The great night came, and here is what I saw, an account of which I published at the time:

'"All the influential deities of the neighbourhood were assembled, in great style, at the temple of the God of the Eastern Peak, and, after the reciting of many prayers—if such be not a prostituting of the word—and the blazing away of countless crackers, the whole pantheon set off late at night to escort the visiting demons and their boat to the river.

'"It was a weird scene. The accompanying crowd of human escorts numbered between five and ten thousand, each man—they were all men, and nearly all of them young men—carrying either a lantern at the end of a long strip of bamboo, or a blazing torch. We have seen processions before, but never so elaborate as on this occasion. Instead of travelling at the usual slow processional pace, the whole mass ran as fast as our narrow streets permitted, every man shouting at the top of his voice. Any one who has had to face, or flee from, a howling crowd of this kind, knows the thrill it inspires. On reaching the river-bank the paper junk was speedily launched, a boatman with more pluck, or less love of life than his fellows, being in readiness to tow it down the river, where the spirits were soon sent somewhere else enwrapped in flames. Immediately the escort had passed out of the city the gate was closed, and no sooner was the paper junk launched than all lamps were hastily extinguished and everybody sneaked quickly and quietly

home into the city by another gate, so that the spirits might lose their bearings, and not be able to find the way back again. How clever the Chinese are! And what fools the spirits! The Chinese very evidently think themselves cleverer than either the gods or devils whom they worship, which makes one wonder why they worship them.

'"In this particular district it is the custom to tell the demons that Wenchow is a very poor place, but that there is a city called Yangchow where the people are rich, the houses fine, the women beautiful, and everything much superior to what it is here. At the city of Ch'uchow, up the Wenchow river, the demons, on occasions like the present, are always told that Wenchow is a better place than Ch'uchow. Thus the people pass on the demons one to another—all which seems somewhat to differ from the teaching of 'the Master', 'What you do not want yourself, do not pass on to others.'"'[1]

When the heavens withhold their rain it is the magistrate's duty also to undergo no small hardship in inducing the rain divinity to discover the callousness of its indifference. Thus he becomes the 'rain-maker' of his district, and an onerous duty it is. Kind heaven may send down copious rains year after year, which he allows to tear away the soil, and silt up the rivers. These, changing their unguarded course, sweep over the land and bring death and devastation upon thousands and millions, as witness the Yellow River; but it is not his part to conserve the copious rain for seasons of drought. In his prodigality and ignorance he can only pray for more. For instance, instead of searching out the cause of the terrible Yellow River floods, which lies in the western provinces of Shensi and Shansi, he chiefly contents himself with a round of superstitious worship. Not that he likes this, for in prolonged drought he may have to visit many

[1] *A Mission in China*, by W. E. Soothill.

temples, travel far, and suffer, not only inconvenience, but much exposure to the heat. When I once urged upon a powerful governor that praying for precious rain was like a prodigal who had wasted his father's patrimony demanding more, and that it would be better to conserve the rain by building irrigation works than to pray for it, he replied, 'If I don't go and pray for it I shall have the people up in arms against me.' Thus it will be seen that the mandarin in his time plays many parts, and, moreover, has his many masters.

It is also the duty of the officials in every county and township once a year to perform religious ceremonies and plough the land at the temple of the god of the grain, thus setting an example to their people. The emperor, either in person or by deputy, does the same in the capital. It is their duty, also, to go in procession four times a year, to meet the four seasons. The most interesting of these is the meeting of spring, when the officials go clad in costly furs to worship outside the east gate of the city. Crowds of people line the streets to watch the gay procession, which is led by a beggar carried in a chair—a mandarin for a day. A wooden figure is carried in another open chair, and at this the people aim blows with wands and sticks, under the notion that the better it is beaten, the better will be the year. Whether this and other doings and sayings connected with the rite will show that it is another instance that may be added to the many given in the *Golden Bough* of the common origin of ancient spring or Easter celebrations I must leave to anthropologists to inquire and determine. At the temple where the ceremony is held, outside the east gate, a large paper bullock is provided, with a paper cowboy in attendance. The bullock is painted in variegated patches to indicate what the character of the year is to be—whether there is to be much rain, or fire, and so on. After the ceremony

the paper bullock and boy are attacked by the people with their decorated wands, and beaten to pieces, the people scrambling for bits of the paper to take home for luck.

A singular observance occurs after a great fire, in the shape of a thanksgiving service, 'to thank the grace of Heaven', as it is called. I suppose it is those who have not suffered who are thankful; at any rate, public plays are performed, as well as offerings made both on the spot and in the temple of the god of fire. It must be borne in mind that the stage in China is chiefly associated with the temples. Every temple of any pretensions has a stage instead of a pulpit; indeed, it is Christianity which introduces the pulpit wherever it goes. The plays are given for the delectation of both gods and men. It is less the character of the play than its association with pagan worship that hinders Chinese Christians from contributing the compulsory capitation levies demanded by local custom for these performances. In this respect the stage has hitherto been a barrier to the progress of Christianity of almost equal magnitude with ancestor-worship, for men, who may be sympathetic with Christianity, dislike to offend their clansmen, friends, and neighbours by refusing to contribute a few paltry cash towards a play which is, perhaps, their one excitement of the year. When they see the houses of Christians broken into through their passive resistance, their goods carried off, their persons beaten and cruelly treated, and whole families driven out of house and home, all this deters many a man, who desires the strength and comfort of the Christian religion, from parting with the material comfort he already possesses.

Desirous as I am of emphasizing the helpful and healthy side of the Chinese religions, I am driven to confess that it is not in official religion that such is to be found. Indeed, taking the official religion as a whole,

apart from the worship of Shang Ti, it is a mass of childish superstitions, often degrading to intelligent men, of meagre moral value, and possessed of little, indeed, almost devoid of, spiritual inspiration. Even in its noblest form at the Temple of Heaven, as ordinarily conducted, there has generally been an absence of that nobility of sentiment, dignified confidence, chasteness of expression, and strength of spiritual aspiration which is found in the great public ceremonials of Christian lands. The official worship of the Chinese is almost, if not entirely, a material worship for material benefits, and while a personal God is recognized, a belief in the continued existence of the human soul evidenced, and moral retribution portrayed, yet spiritual value in the official religion is comparatively absent.

LECTURE XII

PRIVATE RELIGION

After all, it is neither public religion nor a philosophy of religion that is of primary importance to the missionary. With public religion he may have little to do. With the philosophy of religion he may have even less. But the soul of the private individual, this will be the garden he must, above all things, study and cultivate. What is the character of its soil, what the weeds and flowers that flourish there, what the new seed it is capable of bearing, what the kind of fertilizer that it needs?—these are the problems to which he must address himself and endeavour to find the solution. To some the solution comes by a sort of intuition. Others have almost as little capacity for discriminating the conditions as they have for thinking out a solution. They only know how to plough up everything, good, bad, and indifferent, and sow on the surface of an arid soil a seed unsteeped in gracious sympathy, a seed which, like rice, needs the husk softened before it is sown, as well as warmth and moisture for its growth and full fruiting. There are some who have the insight to perceive the quality of the soil in which they are sowing, and what quality and quantity of seed it will for the time being support and evolve. There are others who have no such instinct.

There are some who are so filled with the undoubted superiority of their message, that they think its superiority is best manifested in a manner sufficiently superior to

impress upon their hearers an unnecessary and uncomfortable sense of humiliating inferiority. This is not usually a condition of high receptivity. It is not healthy to talk down at people. There is one rule, a very sane one, and that is not to underrate the intelligence even of a rustic audience, but with simple manliness or womanliness to give of one's best in terms which the audience understand, for the glory of Christianity is that it can be easily apprehended and practised even by the illiterate. 'Preach unto others as you would have them preach unto you—under similar conditions'—should be written on the tablets of every missionary's heart. Project yourself into the other man's mind and see how you would like to be addressed and converted.

What, then, is the private religion of the Chinese? One might answer the question by saying: [Confucianism, as Confucius saw it, limits private religion to the worship of the ancestors, a moral life which will satisfy them, and a recognition of a just omniscient Heaven above, to whom every thought and action is revealed, and who is aided by a host of spiritual ministers. Taoism urges its followers to peace, or quietism, in the present life, and a search after the state of the immortals through a moral life and through superstitious practices associated with animistic notions, with magical rites, and with the worship of men who have attained to the rank of the immortals. Buddhism calls its devotees to escape hell and attain to heaven by the frequent invocation of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, together with fastings and pilgrimages and a moral and altruistic life.] This would be a fair way of generalizing, but, like most generalizations, so far as the individual is concerned, it would be incomplete!

I have already reminded you that the Chinese people are not divided into these three distinct and separate classes. They cannot be segregated into any such water-

tight compartments. Not that there are no distinctions. There are; but they are principally distinctions of mind and character, rather than divisions into separate schools. The fact is, that the outstanding doctrines and principles of the three religions have entered into so close a combination that they have precipitated, almost inseparably, in the mind and character of the people. This precipitation has been brought about perhaps as much through maternal as through paternal influence. It is always a mistake to under-estimate the power of woman in China, or indeed in any other Eastern land. She has charge of the children, both sons and daughters, during the impressionable age, and imprints upon them her own religious ideas, ideas which remain even after the sons are brought into contact with the world. As some one has sagely observed, Confucianism subordinated woman to an inferior position, and woman has had her revenge by adopting and establishing its rival, Buddhism.

Now, private religion may be said to divide itself into two parts, namely, domestic religion and personal religion. To any one who knows the Chinese there can be little doubt that private religion is more common in the sense of family observances than in that of personal religion. This is quite in keeping with the character, the history, and the philosophy of the people. The national religion, as well as the national government, is built on a patriarchal foundation. The emperor was not only the Son of Heaven, but the patriarch of his people, the legal and religious father of the nation. In similar fashion, the governor of a province is the legal and religious patriarch of his province, as a taot'ai is of his tao, a prefect of his prefecture, a sub-prefect of his sub-prefecture, a chieftain of his clan, a sub-chieftain of his sub-clan, and a father of a family, which includes sons and daughters-in-law, and all his grandchildren.

The domestic side of private religion would seem to have been limited by the code of pre-Confucian China, and supported by him, to the worship of the more immediate progenitors of the family, to whom the family and its individual members had a moral and religious responsibility. But I think there is sufficient evidence to show that Confucius also recognized a relationship between the Divine, or Heaven, and the individual, a relationship which engendered reverence, imposed a trust, and, if it did not encourage direct approach in prayer, justified confidence in looking up to It, and obeying the inward sense of Its guidance.

It is important, however, to bear in mind that the family, rather than the individual, is the unit in China. In family life all things go into the common stock, of which the father has the disposal; for *patria potestas* is the law. For this reason domestic religion, rather than personal religion, more correctly represents the general attitude. But it is only just to Confucius to say that he clearly recognizes the rights, the responsibilities, and the individuality of sons, for he clearly asserts that a man may not allow father, teacher, or any one to undertake his moral duties for him. Taoism and Buddhism also, and even more so, stand for individual responsibility. Moreover, human nature asserts itself the world over, and so, even in the affairs of the family, *patria potestas* is generally a sort of birch rod kept in a dark corner or a closed cupboard, only to be brought out in flagrant cases. The family knows it is there, and this is usually a sufficient stimulant. Some fathers, of course, abuse it, others turn their eyes more frequently towards the cupboard than is wise, even as some do in this country, but the soul of the individual is recognized as his own. Consequently, personal religion is left to the individual member of the family, so long as that religion is sufficiently orthodox, and the domestic

rites duly observed. It is at this juncture that Christianity is disturbing, for it divides or discomposes the unit, the family, by its contravention of domestic rites of immemorial antiquity, rites on which the family believes that it depends for its well-being, indeed for its very existence.

Domestic religion to-day consists of much more than that laid down in the ancient Confucian code. The family ancestors of the three preceding generations have been found insufficient. Perhaps their character has been too well known! Perhaps some of them were vindictive, the very sort that would be likely to cause trouble after they were dead. Be that as it may, the *lares et penates* of the household are no longer limited to the ancestors' shrines. Indeed it seems as if, even in the days of Confucius, the household gods were not limited to the shrines of the ancestors. He speaks somewhere of the five guardian spirits of the household, and to this day the household has its deities of an order resembling those mentioned by him. At the entrance to any house belonging to people able to afford a gateway are found the gate gods, two huge figures painted on its twin leaves, whose stern mien is warranted to scare away any of the demoniacal host who cast longing eyes on this tempting abode. There is also the very important 'kitchen god', who ascends periodically to report on the family's deeds and misdeeds. The irony of it is the family has to present it with offerings and release it in flames from the bondage of the paper on which it is painted. One cannot but think that the temptation must come at times not to release it at all. There is also the guardian spirit of the hall, of each bedroom, even of the bed, and of places very much less dignified.

Before the shrines of each of these spirits, incense-sticks and candles are lit at least at the new and full moons, and offerings of food made at the proper seasons. Fortunately spirits are always contented with the volatile savour of the

sacrifice, thus leaving the substance for the more substantial.

If the family be engaged in a trade or craft, then the patron saint or divinity of the trade or craft, generally of Taoist origin, must be worshipped. This is the duty of the youngest apprentice — another serious difficulty in the way of Christian youths learning a trade. Mammon, or the god of riches, is the patron of tradesmen, and in places like Canton one cannot enter a shop without brushing against his shrine in the open doorway.

If the family be engaged in agriculture, then the guardian spirits of the land, and of the crops, must be propitiated, and flags, possibly of Buddhist origin, but usually of Taoist preparation, must be placed over the seed that is sown, in order to protect it from evil spirits, even as the farmer must himself sleep in his fields when the crops are ripe to keep thieves from reaping his crops.

If a member of the family be sick, then offerings must be made in temple after temple until the sick one recovers —or otherwise. The gods must be consulted about the prescription which the doctor has written out, or even asked for a prescription. Perhaps one of the souls of the sick one has strayed, his fevered talk or comatose condition suggesting the likelihood of this. If so, his wandering soul must be recovered from some Taoist temple, through the influence of the deity there.

Women who have not been blessed with a son, and who yearn to purge away their shame, must worship at the shrine of the Taoist or Buddhist goddess who can answer their longing cry, and vows must be made and presents promised to the goddess. Her shrines are often crowded with little images—of boys—presented as thankofferings. Should a child be sick, petitions must be offered to this divinity for its recovery. There is an aged couple in certain Taoist temples whose plaster images are worshipped if the

child be restless at night, and who are able to make it sleep. There is the goddess of small-pox and measles, and of infantile diseases generally.

Time fails to tell of the thousand and one superstitions which come within the purview of domestic religion. Its rites are simple and its object obvious. The rites consist in the use of candles and incense-sticks, presented with a given number of bows or genuflexions. When carried further, offerings of food are presented. The object is, not moral or spiritual development, but material welfare and family comfort.

It is only with the introduction of Christianity that a new ideal for family life is begotten, the ideal of the family in its relationship to, dependence upon, and trust in, a Divine Father, and the development of the family life and character in the grace and truth, moral and spiritual, of a Divine Saviour. Chinese Christian parents accept this ideal, family worship of a spiritual character takes the place of ignoble superstition, and in the moral and spiritual tie the family finds a double-stranded unity capable of higher work than the older single-stranded unit of merely material well-being.

It would be easy to pursue in detail the very numerous and superstitious phases of domestic religion, but when we turn to the question of personal religion the course is not so simple. If by personal religion be meant fear of spiritual beings and an endeavour to propitiate them by offerings, or, trust in them, and an endeavour to avail of their help in the affairs of this life, then the Chinese, far from being without personal religion, are amongst the most religious people on the face of the earth. If, on the other hand, by personal religion we mean cultivation of the moral and spiritual faculties in the presence of the Divine and Eternal, then I fear that the great mass cannot be called religious.

At the same time, I want to make it clear to you that there are men and women, here and there, who, through

personal religion, are endeavouring to find satisfaction for their spiritual, and strength for their moral natures. They are not content to accept the things of the material or domestic life as the all in all for this life. The higher human nature in China resembles the higher human nature in the West. Cords seem to be vibrating in some other dimension which stir the heartstrings here; voices to be singing afar off, whose separate notes cannot be discerned; beings beneficent seem to be guarding and beckoning with invisible hands; another, a strange and sweeter life, seems to surround this. At any rate there is a something somewhere which can only be attained by moral and spiritual effort, and that effort, any effort, at whatever cost, they are willing to make. Of such there are some in China, and there are many millions with a sufficient preparation to respond to a clear call to this higher life.

Such preparation is due to the aspirations of Taoism, to the undefined recognition of the unseen in Confucianism, and not least to the doctrines of salvation in Mahāyāna Buddhism. Confucianism has stood for morals, reverence for the unseen, and public religion; Taoism for mysticism and a form of private religion in which the state of the immortals is sought, often in grotesque fashion; but perhaps Buddhism has been the most effective spiritual factor in the religion of China, as of the Far East generally. I say this, while recognizing and valuing the sense of responsibility not only to progenitors, but to Heaven, and also the sense of the continued life, which both Confucianism and Taoism have maintained throughout the ages, as well as the 'sanction' for morals they have recognized in religion.

Nevertheless, as religions I can only rank Confucianism and Taoism as spiritually low; and with all its superstitions and stupor, it seems to me that Buddhism is entitled to take higher rank than either in the spiritual sense. At

the same time, I would not have you misunderstand me, for in my estimation all three together, as a spiritual agency, are of an inferior order, enmeshed in superstition, and inadequate for the development of an enlightened spirituality. Their highest development stops short of that joy in God, and that exhilarating sense of freedom through communion with Him, which is the glory of Christianity, and the high privilege of the Christian who has risen above the thraldom of forms and ceremonies.

I have been looking around in thought amongst my Chinese friends of the educated class, and asking myself what is their religious condition. In many cases, despite the fact, perhaps because of it, that, being men of the official class, they have public worship to perform, they are more or less sceptical. Nevertheless, they have been brought up in a religious atmosphere, and their scepticism is only one side of their nature, perhaps merely a veneer on the surface. There is another side in the sense of awe, or at least respect, for the invisible powers of the universe. Actual atheism is or was exceedingly rare; indeed, I might even say, was totally absent.

Again, there are some amongst them who, brought up as they have been in the atmosphere of the Confucian classics, possess the reverent mind of Confucius, and comfort themselves with the philosophic satisfaction that in doing their duty they are fulfilling their destiny in this life, and making themselves ready thereby for their destiny in a future life —if there be one. Many of them have studied Taoist and Buddhist books, and are well acquainted with the aims and practices of both cults.

A few there are who do not find satisfaction in the two native religions, and who adopt Buddhist practices, abstaining for a period from flesh and repeating Buddhist invocations. I have only personally known one or two such, though it is not uncommon for men of this character,

who are in official life, to take the opportunity of visiting Buddhist or Taoist monasteries in the course of their travels, and devoutly worshipping at their shrines. In past generations men of this class have occasionally resigned their office in order to seek a retreat in monastic seclusion. Such instances are rare at the present day.

There are men who devote themselves to a given period of religion, either Taoist or Buddhist. This period may last a few weeks, a few months, or a few years. It generally involves abstinence from certain kinds of food, and the daily repetition of certain invocations. With the more devout this sometimes leads to the performance of a pilgrimage, usually to some famous Buddhist monastery, which often necessitates toilsome travel and no small expense. Every year thousands, and tens of thousands, of men and women take long journeys to distant monasteries, there to spend a given period in invocation and in the performance of religious rites. In return they receive a certificate from the resident abbot attesting their devotion and ensuring them relief in the life to come.

For instance, on the island of P'u-tu, south of the Yangtze, is a famous Buddhist monastery to which great numbers flock every year. The journey is a hazardous one, for it has to be made by sea, in junks which not only make little provision for comfort, but which sometimes have to face terrible weather, and possibly may even be caught in one of the devastating typhoons so common in summer on the China coast.

A certain old lady, who had made this arduous journey and obtained two passports into heaven, one to be placed in her coffin, the other to be burnt at her funeral, became a convert to Christianity. Some time after her conversion she sent to my wife her two precious passports, which had been her chief possession for many years. I have often thought of the extraordinary faith which led an old Chinese

lady, who had only seen a foreigner twice or thrice, to part with the written promise of entry into eternal happiness, sealed by an abbot of a religion she had believed in all her life, in exchange for a verbal promise from a stranger. Yet it was not the promise of a stranger for which she exchanged it, but the realization of a communion with One whom she had long sought, and at last found.

Many secret societies have existed and still do exist. Some of them have been formed purely and simply for political purposes, often anti-dynastic, though generally they have been politico-religious. Others have been formed for religious purposes only, the members pledging themselves to abstain from flesh, from intoxicants, and from tobacco. Nor has abstinence been the only rule of such a society, for the patron saint, or divinity of the society, has become also the patron saint of each member, and been especially worshipped by him. Some of these societies have undoubtedly assisted in the development of a kind of personal religion, independent of domestic religion. As a rule they are associated with the Taoist religion, and though proscribed by law, perhaps *propter hoc*, they have flourished from time to time over a wide area. Their tendency, in the long run, has been to degenerate into political organizations, which indeed is the real cause of proscription. At times they have caused rebellions, and fostered a fanaticism, such as made itself so terribly felt during the Boxer outbreak of 1900.

The personal religion of the average Chinese can only be described as of an inferior order. It consists of going the round of as many shrines as can be reached during the first day or two of the new year. He carries with him a basket well filled with tiny candles and sticks of incense. At each shrine he lights a couple of candles and three sticks of incense, makes his obeisance in acknowledgement

of the protection he has received during the year which is past, and looks for a continuance—on a larger scale if the divinity be willing—during the year upon which he has just entered. He spends a busy day or two in this fashion, and then hopes he has done with religion for the rest of the year. For, remember, religion is not a delight, worship at other times of the year implying sickness, or trouble of one sort or another; so in a sense the less a man has to do with religion, the happier he is. A visit to the temples will show you abundant tokens of gratitude—but they are for recovery from sickness or for the granting of children, or some other mundane advantage arising out of a condition of anxiety or distress.

He has, of course, certain other religious duties to perform at home, but they involve little effort or expense. He will see to it that incense is lighted before the shrines of his household gods, and at the right season have offerings of food made before his ancestors' tablets, as well as to the *lares et penates* of his household. He may also every evening light a lantern before his door, partly as a deed of merit for the sake of pedestrians, partly as an act of worship to the three powers that rule above, below, and on the earth. At the same time he lights three sticks of incense, and bows with them towards the outside, apparently in the worship of the whole host of heaven as well as the three rulers, and ends by sticking the incense into a crevice in the doorpost.

The great time for religion is when he falls ill or dies. Then the priests are called in to perform, in the one case, religious ceremonies to appease the god or devil who is causing the trouble, in the other case to perform the funeral rites. In both instances the measure of the ceremonies is dependent upon the ability of the family to pay for them.

He recognizes morals as part of religion, for he realizes

that his actions are being observed by invisible eyes, and duly reported upon. This often acts as a deterrent from ill deeds, as well as an incentive to deeds of kindness. Such deeds of kindness may express themselves in the sparing of animal life, or in the releasing of vermin which would be better destroyed, but they do also take a more practical form in real acts of charity and humanity. There is, it is true, much callousness to suffering, the root of which lies partly in poverty, partly in fear of the evil spirits, as, for instance, in the case of rescuing the drowning, where it is feared that to baulk the spirit which has decoyed the unfortunate person into the water will result in its wreaking vengeance on the saviour. Life-saving in this country would be at a discount, also, had we the demons here that they have in China. Nevertheless, there is much sympathy and beneficence, the expression of a sentiment which is at the bottom religious.

Notwithstanding this, and taking the Chinese as a whole, personal religion cannot be considered as of high standard. For the most part it is associated with temporal protection and benefit, and only amongst the comparative few is it practised for the sake of moral and spiritual attainment. You will readily see how difficult it is for this state of things to be otherwise, for unless we accept the Goddess of Mercy, the Chinese have no God whom they can love and adore. The Pantheon is filled with departmental deities of a nature calculated to inspire fear or respect, but not to call forth either personal affection or aspiration for spiritual communion. Indeed, while I have met with multitudes of instances where men have made their offerings and prayers for temporal benefits, it has not been my lot to meet with those who prayed to their gods for strength to live a holy life.

The very nature of their gods renders the idea of personal communion, that communion which the Christian

seeks to enjoy with the Divine Father, or with the Living Holy Saviour, an unthinkable one. What 'sweet communion' can a man have, for instance, with the god of fire, or with the very numerous tutelary deities, or with the huge impassive Buddhas, or with Confucius or Laocius? Prayer he may offer to his gods in his need, and in his distress and fear, but communion and spiritual inspiration —where is he to go for these?

While desiring to do the fullest justice to the religious thinkers who have done so much for China, while protesting also against unnecessary and ungracious misrepresentation, and while recognizing the value of the three religions for public morals, for private morals, and in a measure also for domestic and personal welfare, I cannot find in them any approach to the spiritual communion, to the joy and delight in God and His works, or to the inspiration with which we are familiar not only in the Bible, but in the experience of so many beautiful souls in Christian countries. Philosophic calmness, and a dignified fulfilling of one's present duty, together with the unruffled awaiting of one's destiny, are worthy of high admiration. But these are not common, neither are they to be compared with the enriching sense which accompanies the fuller spiritual life in conscious and joyful association with the Divine. Until men *know* the Lord, it is not possible for them to enter into communion with, love, and rejoice in Him. This knowledge it is which raises personal religion from a low to a high state of efficiency and enjoyment.

The very multiplicity of the Chinese objects of worship makes such a state impossible. And in consequence personal religion is for the most part deplorably low, and, in so far as my own observation goes, I cannot say that it ever rises high. I say this while freely admitting that the spiritual side of a man's life may be hidden from the outside observer, and while refusing to believe that there are

none whose conceptions rise above the externals of idolatry and who enter into the holy of holies. I should like to meet such. I have never done so, except amongst men who have made the entry in company with Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, let me say, you are going where you are greatly needed, your message is the crown of human life and glory, and your opportunity unequalled. Some of us wish we were thirty years younger that we might see what your eyes will see. Go in the right spirit, always magnanimous, ever undaunted, and may you carry in yourselves the grace, the love, and the fellowship which the Lord Jesus Christ, the Father, and the Holy Ghost, are ever willing to share with those who will to possess them.

NOTE

THE T'AI-CHI AND YIN-YANG

We do not know when the Chinese first expressed their cosmic philosophy in the form of the T'ai-chi (p. 148), i. e. the 'Great Extreme', Ultimate Principle, or The Universe. There is no doubt that the symbol, whatever its origin, is an old and interesting attempt to express their conception of the universe. It is worthy of note that the principal idea portrayed is essentially monistic, that is to say, the universe is a *unit*, containing two main elements, which subdivide still further to infinity. It is the *unity* operating through its dual contents which gives the figure its name, the T'ai-chi. It is not the dual contents which make it 'the Monad', but 'the Monad' which evolves and contains the twin forces. In general it may be said that the common translation of these two forces 'Yin-yang' as the 'male and female principle' is sufficiently accurate, for those are the primitive ideas represented. Farther west the sex idea has remained as an integral part of the noun in the form of 'gender'. In China, though individual words give no such inherent indication, yet 'gender' (without a 'neuter') rules everything concrete and abstract, active and passive; every thought, word, deed is yin or yang.

The T'ai-chi can scarcely be styled 'the Absolute', for it represents the created, not the Creator. The Supreme Power has been personified in Shang Ti, but he is not 'the Monad', any more than the emperor was the empire. Shang Ti always seems to be considered as transcendent.

'Heaven is father, earth is mother' and man is the product of both, and with them forms the trinity of powers. It is a real trinity, for each part is dependent on the others. Man thus forms an integral part of 'the Cosmic Order'. The universe and man are intimately connected, therefore any disturbance in the human realm affects also what we should call the realm of nature. One can hardly say that there is a natural realm on the one hand and a human realm on the other, for in reality they also form a monad. Man aids nature by his ritual, as nature aids man in response; the interaction of both is

essential to harmony. For instance, it was man's duty sacrificially to help nature in spring to arouse itself from its winter sleep and in autumn to assist in putting it to sleep again. His dwelling, his fields, his occupations must all be arranged so as to co-operate with and assist nature. This was probably a law long before the definition of an animated universe.

It is extremely difficult for a modern student to place himself in the universe of the ancients; when he succeeds he does not find himself in a 'wonder land', but in a very logical and mechanical one. The pagan mind is not a chaos, but a cosmos. It is all ordered, on a scale of its own; there is little room for 'wonder', for imagination, for spirituality. It is organized and ruled by ritual, which must be rigidly observed, otherwise the harmony of the spheres will be disturbed. In this respect Confucius and his school are truer to the national type than Lao-tzŭ and the Taoist school, who sought, at first, to free the mind and spirit from the age-long ceremonial fetters associated with the 'assisting of Nature'. Ritualism is an essential element and the main strength of paganism. Confucius and his school, highly 'religious', maintained it and failed to make it an effective spiritual force.

We may assume, then, that out of a primitive differentiation of sex arose the binomial idea, which in the process of the ages grew into the Yin-yang system of co-ordinating the affairs, first of man and nature, then of man and the spirits, natural and disembodied. This system in highly developed form still dominates China, but the recent advent of religion and science is slowly pushing it back into the night of the past.

Professor Marcel Granet in *La Religion des Chinois* has lately offered a suggestive contribution towards a sociological study of the ancient Chinese, with sex as the origin of religion and of the Yin-yang philosophy. He has worked, as he says, 'à l'aide d'inductions', but unfortunately neither book, chapter, nor verse is given 'aux fanatiques de l'histoire épris de faits individuels et de précision chronologique'!

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